

# State Route 97 – Pateros to the Canadian Border

## SCENIC BYWAY APPLICATION VISUAL ANALYSIS DISCIPLINE REPORT



July 2002



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

Sandra L. Salisbury, L.A.  
Headquarters, Design Office  
Roadside & Site Development Unit

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## SCENIC BYWAY APPLICATION OVERVIEW

For purposes of this study, staff divided the 83-mile section of SR 97 from Pateros, Mile Post (MP) 253.38 to the Canadian border at Oroville/Osoyoos (MP 336.48) into fifteen Landscape Units with views both northbound and southbound. Landscape Units are based on topography. The route follows the Okanogan River as it flows out of Canada toward its juncture with the Columbia River and continues along the Columbia River to the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers in Pateros.

## STUDIES AND COORDINATION

The visual analysis was performed by a licensed landscape architect and a team from Washington State Department of Transportation's Heritage Corridors Program, using a visual assessment technique developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and recorded using Scenic 2.0 software, also created by WSDOT.

The assessment is based upon the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration publication "Visual Assessment for Highway Projects," March 1981. Views were analyzed for vividness, intactness, and unity of landform, vegetation, water, ephemeral, and human built elements.

The selected corridor runs through Colville Confederated Tribes, Bureau of Land Management, Okanogan County, and private land ownership. WSDOT is coordinating with the Scenic Byway Committee of Highway 97 Border Region Coalition. Membership of the Coalition consists of representatives from the cities of Brewster, Pateros, Okanogan, Omak, Riverside, Tonasket, Oroville, smaller communities such as Ellisforde, and the Colville Confederated Tribes.

## SCENIC THRESHOLDS

Values for Landform, Water, Vegetation, Ephemeral, Human, Unity, and Intactness were analyzed and averaged separately. For the purposes of this study, three thresholds were established based on average ratings for each value and for the landscape unit as a whole.

- Average ratings between 6 and 7 are considered *exceptionally scenic*
- Average ratings between 5 and 6 are considered *highly scenic*
- Average ratings between 4 and 5 are considered *scenic*

The presence or absence of water in visual impact assessments skews ratings, therefore :

- Where waterbodies are present in significant portions of the landscape unit and ratings for views reached a 7, the landscape unit is determined to have *exceptionally scenic* ratings for water.
- Where ratings for water are between 4 and 6 at any point in the landscape unit, the landscape unit is determined to have *highly scenic* ratings for water.
- Where ratings for water are between 1 and 3 at any point in the landscape unit, the landscape unit is determined to have *scenic* ratings for water. This is due to the fact that water, however minor the areal extent, enhances the visual quality of a

scene. For example, a small stream may not be seen for a long duration, but its presence is attractive, as evidenced by the real estate market.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Over seventy-seven percent of this study area is classified as “scenic” or better. Each landscape unit contains areas of exceptionally scenic value based upon landform, vegetation, water, or ephemeral ratings. The geology of the region is one of the most dominant scenic characteristics and this is easily viewed from SR 97. There are frequent views of the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers that are rated either highly scenic or exceptionally scenic. There is a diversity of vegetation types, ranging from old-growth Ponderosa pine and sage-bitterbrush stands, to riparian forests, fruit orchards, and agricultural fields. Ephemeral views include orchards in spring bloom and summer fruit, horses grazing in green fields, thunderheads, rolls of hay, and clear starry nights. Human elements such as old barns or rustic cabins occasionally provide highly scenic and picturesque views.

There are some human impacts that encroach on the views such as unscreened “junk” yards, irrigation settlement ponds, run-down buildings, and ubiquitous power and telephone poles and lines. These encroachments are generally of short duration within the landscape and, in many cases, could be mitigated through screening by vegetation or berms. Many towns along this route are in the process of planting street trees or hanging banners or flower baskets within the main business districts. These continuing improvements will help raise the human, unity, and intactness scores.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is this author’s professional opinion that this corridor should be classified as a Washington State Scenic Byway.



# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

Average and peak ratings for each landscape unit are located in Appendix A. During this study, staff analyzed views traveling both northbound and southbound. In many cases, ratings for direction of travel differed markedly. For example, the wave-like rock formations near Riverside were exceptionally vivid (7) when traveling northbound but when traveling southbound the full character of the shear granite face was not visible. Therefore, when traveling southbound, the vividness rating for landform in that landscape unit is only rated as a 5. Tables in this report show ratings for both directions of travel for each landscape unit.

## 1.2. OVERVIEW OF SR 97 CORRIDOR

### 1.2.1. History

Interstate 97 spans 336.48 miles in Washington starting from the Oregon border and ending at the Oroville/Osoyoos Port of Entry into Canada. The Scenic Byway Committee of Highway 97 Border Coalition has applied to the Washington State Transportation Commission for designation as a Washington State Scenic Byway. This study provides information about the proposed route's qualifications for Scenic Byway status.

The Okanogan Highlands in Washington encompass an area of approximately 14,000 square miles, from the Canadian border in the north, to Lake Roosevelt on the east, to the Columbia River Plateau to the south, and to the Cascade Mountain Range on the west. Much of this area is sparsely populated. Vegetation ranges from Ponderosa pine forests to shrub-steppe areas with sage, bitterbrush, and rabbitbrush; riparian hardwood forests; and agricultural land uses.

State Route 97 connects historical settlements from the earliest paleontological settlements of the spear-hunters and sacred sites of present day Native Americans to the forts of the Hudson Bay Company. There are sites of old gold camps, sawmills, and railroads. There are still log cabins and other signs of early white settlers. The Columbia and Okanogan Rivers follow a section of the old Caribou Trail, the longest cattle drive outside Texas.

### 1.2.2. Natural Environment

There is rich geological evidence of ancient glacial activity, and evidence that points to ice age floods in the benches, mountains, and towering granite cliffs that can be seen from SR 97. The Okanogan Highlands form the western boundary of the Rocky Mountain system. The complex lithology and structure of the Highlands is of great interest to geologists. The glaciated gorge of the Okanogan River and the vast grasslands east of the river support a wealth of wildlife from spawning salmon, to elk, deer, and resident and migrating birds. Wildlife of the Okanogan Highlands reflects a transition between the Cascades and the Rockies with many species common to both such as white-tailed and mule deer. There are hundreds of lakes and streams, sunny days, and clear, star-filled nights.

### **1.2.3. Culture**

This picturesque area contains small towns, the Colville Indian Reservation, western history, art galleries, museums, live theater, farmers' markets, local produce stands, music festivals, rodeos, country fairs, and many opportunities for outdoor recreation. Each August, the Omak Stampede brings visitors from around the world.

## **1.3. STUDY AREA**

For purposes of this study, staff divided the 83-mile section of SR 97 from Pateros, Mile Post (MP) 253.38 to the Canadian border at Oroville/Osoyoos (MP 336.48) into fifteen Landscape Units with views both northbound and southbound. Landscape Units are based on topography. The route follows the Okanogan River as it flows out of Canada toward its juncture with the Columbia River and continues along the Columbia River to the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers in Pateros.

## **2. METHODOLOGY AND COORDINATION**

### **2.1. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

This study complies with the guidelines outlined in the WSDOT *Environmental Procedures Manual*, Section 459, "Visual Impacts, Light, and Glare." A licensed landscape architect performed the visual analysis with a team from Washington State Department of Transportation's Heritage Corridors Program, using a visual assessment technique developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and recorded using Scenic 2.0 software, created by Eric Jackson of the WSDOT.

The assessment is based upon the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration publication "Visual Assessment for Highway Projects" March 1981. The methodology used in this study provides more detail on the components of the "vividness" category than the FHWA method and allows continuous recording of the visual quality of the entire landscape unit rather than analysis from selected stationary viewpoints. The FHWA method is designed to measure changes in the views because of a project, whereas the scenic assessment is designed to rate the visual quality of an entire corridor.

Within each landscape unit, views were continuously analyzed and rated for vividness, intactness, and unity of landform, vegetation, water, ephemeral, and human built elements.

#### **2.1.1. Location and Coordination**

The selected corridor runs through lands of the Colville Confederated Tribes, Bureau of Land Management, Okanogan County, and private land ownership. The Washington State Department (WSDOT) is coordinating with the Scenic Byway Committee of Highway 97 Border Region Coalition. Membership of the Coalition consists of representatives from the cities of Pateros, Brewster, Okanogan, Omak, Riverside, Tonasket, Oroville, smaller communities such as Ellisforde, and the Colville Confederated Tribes.

### 2.1.2. Visual Quality

Visual quality is inherently subjective; therefore objective descriptions are used to quantify the visual assessment. Three criteria used to perform an evaluative appraisal of the landscape visual quality are: Vividness, intactness, and unity. Expert evaluation based on the three criteria have proven to be good predictors of the visual quality using the following sample equation:

$$\text{Visual Quality} = \text{Vividness (of Land, Vegetation, Water, Ephemeral, and Human)} + \text{Intactness} + \text{Unity}$$

Each of the three criteria is independent; each is intended to evaluate one aspect of visual quality. Definitions of these terms are:

**Vividness:** The memorability of the visual impression received from contrasting landscape elements as they combine to form a striking and distinctive visual pattern.

**Intactness:** The integrity of visual order in the natural and man-built landscape, and the extent to which the landscape is free from visual encroachment.

**Unity:** The degree to which the visual resources of the landscape join to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern. Unity refers to the compositional harmony or inter-compatibility between landscape elements.

### 2.1.3. Visual Quality Evaluation

#### 2.1.3.1. Overview

Staff conducted a visual quality evaluation on existing conditions in mid-June 2002 on SR 97 between MP 253.38 and MP 336.48. Staff entered data in Scenic 2.0, a computer program connected to a DMI unit and linked to an Access database. They also took pictures to corroborate the data finding. Appendix "A" displays data from this evaluation.

#### 2.1.3.2. Rating Scale

**Vividness ratings:**

##### **LANDFORM:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Topographic variation is dominant and exceptional. Examples are nearby high mountain peaks, steep valley walls, or deep gorges. Vast and panoramic views are dominant and contain unique topographic features that are visible in striking combinations of form, line, or color. Geologic features are exceptional or regionally significant. They are created by volcanic activity and altered by a fluid agent. Examples include glacial valleys, alpine lakes, sand dunes, loess deposits, deeply incised river gorges, unique shoreforms such as pocket coves, volcanic peaks, or vast basaltic lava flows.

**Moderate Rating (Rating value = 4):** Topographic variation is visible and interesting, but is not a dominant part of the landscape. Panoramic views are present but are either not dominant in the landscape or are a common feature of the region. Form, line, and color formed by landform elements is not exceptionally striking.

**Very Low Rating (Rating value = 1):** Topographic or vertical variation is minimal or not present. Panoramic views are nondescript or not present. Form, line, and color of landform elements are monotonous and unengaging.

#### **VEGETATION:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Vegetative patterns are lush, colorful, distinctive, and form a dominant visual effect in the landscape. Vegetative patterns provide an unusual or outstanding diversity within a viewshed. Examples include old growth or undisturbed alpine forests, seasonal colors, and prolific wildflowers in the mountain or desert environment.

**Moderate Rating (Rating value = 4):** Vegetative patterns of moderate variety or visual diversity that are relatively common to a scenic viewshed.

**Very Low Rating (Rating value = 1):** Vegetative patterns offer little visual diversity. Vegetative patterns are monotonous or common within an area or region.

#### **WATERFORM:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Lakes, streams, or other water bodies that are dominant in the viewshed and visually striking in form and color. Examples include striking views of rivers, lakes, pristine waterfalls, or rushing mountain streams.

**Moderate Rating (Rating value = 4):** Lakes, streams, or other waterbodies that are noticeable, but not a dominant feature in that viewshed.

**Very Low Rating (Rating value = 1):** Lakes, streams, or other waterbodies that are of minimal presence in the viewshed.

#### **EPHEMERAL FEATURES:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Transitory features that are brilliant or striking and contribute significantly to a viewshed but are not present at all times. Examples include migrating wildlife, unique seasonal cloud formations, or marine vessels moving through a waterbody.

**Moderate Rating (Rating value = 4):** Transitory features that contribute moderate visual intensity to a landscape at regular predictable times.

**Very Low Rating (Rating value = 1):** Transitory features that are common or contribute minimally to the viewshed.

#### **HUMAN-BUILT FEATURES:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Traditional city or village centers containing dominant visual elements that combine to form striking forms, lines, or color patterns. Streets,

buildings, skyline, and landscape elements create a strong sense of place and are dominant and highly visible.

**Moderate Rating (Rating value = 4):** Traditional city or village centers containing moderately pleasing visual elements. Form, line, and color pattern combinations are of mediocre quality. Streets, buildings, skyline and landscape elements create a moderate sense of place.

**Very Low Rating (Rating value = 1):** Absence of skyline or traditional city or village center and introduction of unsightly elements. Examples are unscreened junkyards or sewage treatment plants.

#### **Intactness Ratings:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Integrity of visual order in the viewshed is intact and free from encroaching features. Natural landscape is undisturbed with little or no evidence of human modifications. Or, human built elements, which do exist in the natural landscape, blend well and do not encroach upon its visual setting. Human built landscapes contain strong and well-established visual character. Contain no encroachments or eyesores.

**Medium (Rating value = 4):** Integrity of visual order in the viewshed is moderately impacted by human built elements. Natural landscape is moderately impacted by encroaching human built features. Predominantly human built landscapes are moderately impacted by encroaching human built features.

**Very Low (Rating value = 1):** Natural and or human built view is highly altered by encroaching human built features which result in a predominance of eyesores. Examples include suburban sprawl, junkyards, utility lines, or unmitigated resource extraction activities.

#### **Unity Ratings:**

**Very High (Rating value = 7):** Human built or modified elements, where present, blend harmoniously with the natural environment. Colors and materials used give a natural feel and texture to human built structures. In the urban setting, all of the human built elements blend harmoniously.

**Medium (Rating value = 4):** Human built or modified elements fit moderately well into the natural environment. Some of the colors and materials used give a natural feel and texture to human built structures. In an urban environment, human built elements blend moderately well. Natural landscape has a moderate degree of visual order and harmony.

**Very Low (Rating value = 1):** Human built or modified elements contrast markedly and have no visual relation to the natural environment. Visual order is cluttered or significantly distracting for the viewer. Offers no clear, unifying theme. Natural landscapes are visually chaotic and jumbled.

#### **Scenic Rating Thresholds**

Values for Landform, Water, Vegetation, Ephemeral, Human, Unity, and Intactness were analyzed and averaged separately. For the purposes of this study, three thresholds were established based on average ratings for each value and for the landscape unit as a whole.

- Average ratings between 6 and 7 and Cumulative scores of greater than 30 are considered *exceptionally scenic*
- Average ratings between 5 and 6 and Cumulative scores of 25 to 29 are considered *highly scenic*
- Average ratings between 4 and 5 and cumulative scores between 20 and 24 are considered *scenic*

For cumulative ratings, cut-off scores for “non scenic” or “scenic” thresholds were determined by comparing scores for two separate locations side by side – one considered “not scenic” and one “scenic.” This method was repeated five times to determine the scenic threshold. Figure 1 shows the intersection of SR 97 and SR 215 in Omak. This strip-mall type development is not considered “scenic.”



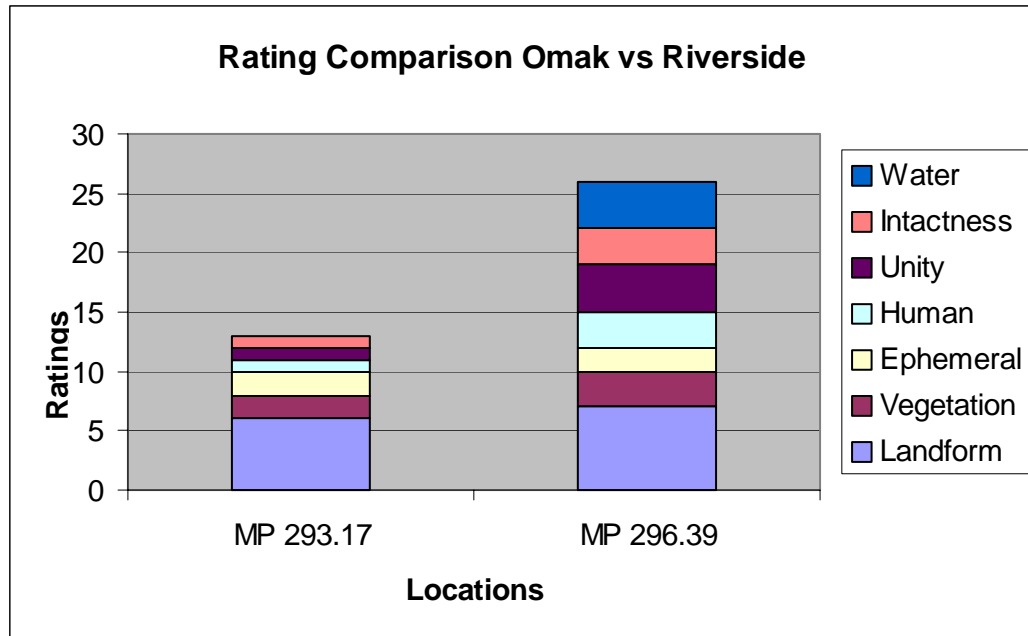
**Figure 1. SR 97 and SR 215 Intersection, MP 293.17**

In contrast, Figure 2 shows a “highly scenic” view approximately three miles north of the photo above.



**Figure 2. Mountain formations northeast of Riverside, MP**

Figure 3 shows the visual quality ratings for each location in stacked bar graphs.



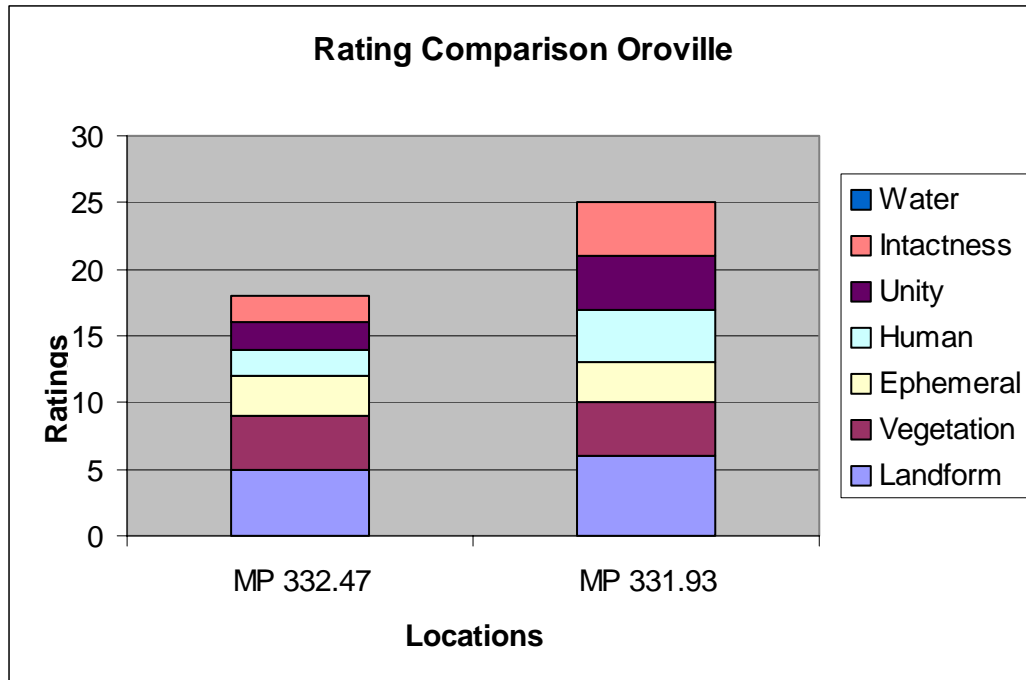
**Figure 3. Cumulative ratings of MP 293.17 and MP 296.39**

Within the town of Oroville, the same comparison was made to determine thresholds by comparing two semiurban views. MP 331.93 is at the southern entry to Oroville. This section of the city has flower baskets hanging from light posts, banners, and street trees, which make it a very attractive downtown. Comparatively, a shopping center with large, a unlandscaped parking lot marks the northern entry into the city. Its visual quality ratings are much lower. Figure 4 shows the southern entry into town.



**Figure 4. Downtown Oroville northbound. MP 332.0**

Figure 5 shows the stacked bar charts for the two views described above.



**Figure 5. Cumulative ratings for two locations in Oroville**

As seen in Figure 5, the location at MP 332.47 has a score of 18. The more scenic location downtown has a rating of 25. The threshold cumulative score for the boundary between “scenic” and “not scenic” for this study is 20.

Within Landscape Unit 1 are industrial locations such as the one in Figure 6.



**Figure 6. Industrial area in Pateros, northbound Landscape Unit 1**

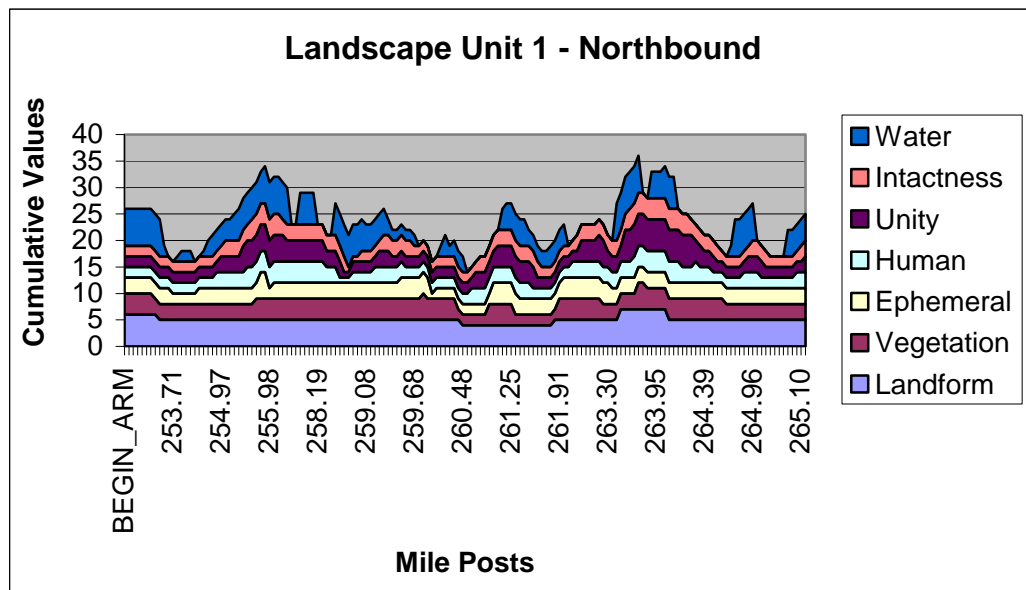
This landscape unit also contains views as in Figure 7 that are highly scenic.





**Figure 7. Columbia River in Landscape Unit 1.**

The area chart in Figure 8 shows all ratings for Landscape Unit 1 northbound. This is shown as a crosscheck for the threshold score determination.



**Figure 8. Cumulative ratings for Landscape Unit 1 Northbound**

Landscape Unit 1 Northbound exceeds the threshold score of 20 on approximately 74% of the road miles.

The computer program, Scenic 2.0, records each factor, such as landform or vegetation, in lengths; therefore, there are seven readings at any time being recorded for each mile. There

is not a strict correlation of 1:7, however. To obtain percentages of scenic classifications, ratings for each factor on each recorded length were added to reach a sum. These sums were sorted from low to high. Classifications were assigned based upon the threshold scores above. Subtotals were obtained for each scenic classification and the sum of all ratings was obtained. Subtotals were divided by the total and multiplied by 100 to obtain the percentages of recorded road lengths for the tables shown in each landscape unit.

### 3. EXISTING CONDITION

The Washington State Department of Transportation's *Roadside Classification Plan* classifies this corridor principally as "Rural." Sections of the highway running through Brewster, Okanogan, Omak, and Tonasket are classified as "Semiurban." The "Rural" classification is characterized "by intermixed built and natural or naturalized elements, with built elements beginning to encroach on the natural environment; human manipulations of the land are evident. Vegetation is predominantly native. Non-native vegetation may reflect historical land use. Zone 2 may be meadow or agricultural crops associated with adjacent farming." A "Semiurban" classification "is characterized by intermixed built and natural or naturalized elements, with built elements prevailing. Vegetation is a combination of native and non-native species. Trees and large shrubs are predominant where sufficient right of way is available."<sup>1</sup>

This corridor runs along the physiographic boundary between the Okanogan Highlands and the Columbia Plateau from MP 253 to MP 270. From the confluence of the Okanogan River with the Columbia River northward, the remainder of the route is within the Okanogan Highlands. The geology of the region is evident and notable along this entire corridor.

#### 3.1. LANDSCAPE UNITS

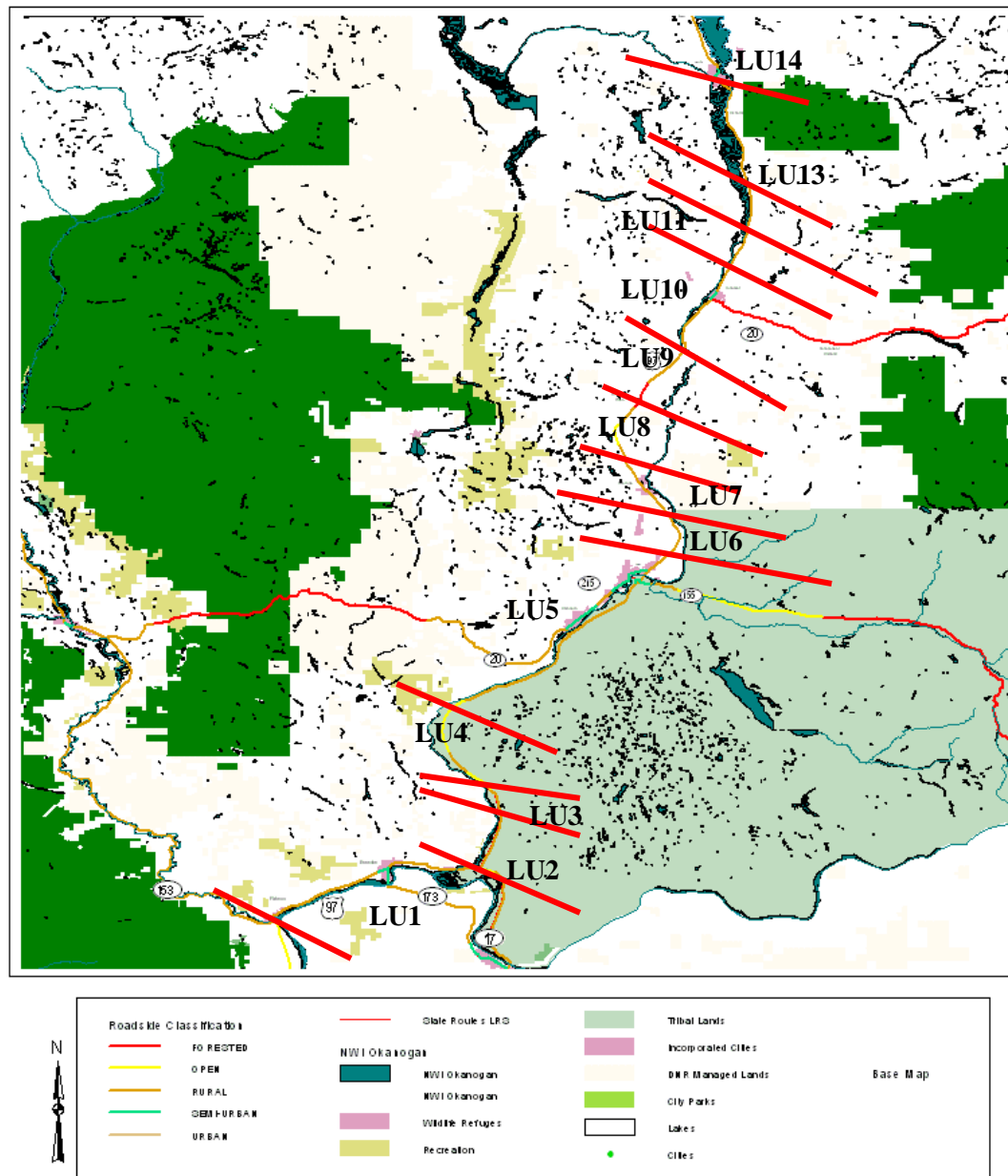
The study area is divided into fifteen Landscape Units based on topography and/or markedly different vegetation zones. The fifteen Landscape Units, rounded to the nearest tenth mile, are shown below and in Figure 1:

- Landscape Unit 1 – Mile Post 253.4 to Mile Post 265.1 – Pateros to SR 17 junction.
- Landscape Unit 2 – Mile Post 265.1 to Mile Post 272.5 – SR 17 north to Ponderosa pines
- Landscape Unit 3 – Mile Post 272.5 to Mile Post 274.3 – Area of old growth Ponderosas
- Landscape Unit 4 – Mile Post 274.3 to Mile Post 278.7 – Open valley
- Landscape Unit 5 – Mile Post 278.7 to Mile Post 293.2 – Hills on east through Omak
- Landscape Unit 6 – Mile Post 293.2 to Mile Post 294.6 – Open valley
- Landscape Unit 7 – Mile Post 294.6 to Mile Post 300.5 – Mountains in waves, Riverside
- Landscape Unit 8 – Mile Post 300.5 to Mile Post 304.2 – Mountain wall on west
- Landscape Unit 9 – Mile Post 304.2 to Mile Post 307.7 – Ponderosas valley walls close
- Landscape Unit 10 – Mile Post 307.7 to Mile Post 315.8 – Open agricultural area
- Landscape Unit 11 – Mile Post 315.8 to Mile Post 318.1 – Open valley, Tonasket
- Landscape Unit 12 – Mile Post 318.1 to Mile Post 324.5 – Mountains on east
- Landscape Unit 13 – Mile Post 324.5 to Mile Post 330.6 – Okanogan River valley on west
- Landscape Unit 14 – Mile Post 330.6 to Mile Post 336.48 – Hills to west, Lake Osoyoos to east
- Landscape Unit 15 – SR 215 Mile Post 6.1 to Mile Post 0 – Downtowns Omak & Okanogan

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State Department of Transportation. *Roadside Classification Plan*. M-25-31. 1996. Pp 11-12.

SR 97 MP 253.38 to 336.48  
Pateros to Oroville/Osoyoos Border Crossing



**Figure 9. Landscape Units within the Project Limits**

Average and peak ratings for each landscape unit are located in Appendix A. During this study, staff analyzed views traveling both northbound and southbound. In many cases, ratings for direction of travel differed markedly. For example, the wave-like rock formations near Riverside were exceptionally vivid (7) when traveling northbound but when traveling southbound the full

character of the shear granite face was not visible. Therefore, when traveling southbound, the vividness rating for landform in that landscape unit is only rated as a five. Tables in this report show key views for both directions of travel for each landscape unit.

### **3.1.1. Landscape Unit 1**

#### **3.1.1.1. Northbound**

Landscape Unit 1 runs from the junction of SR 97 and SR 153 at the confluence of the Methow and Columbia Rivers at MP 253.38. The SR 97 bridge over the Methow River, as seen from the city park in Pateros, is seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 10. SR 97 as it passes over the Methow River as it flows into the Columbia River.**

This landscape unit includes the cities of Pateros and Brewster. Brewster's airport and orchards lie to the east of Brewster.

State Route 97 runs east-west between MP 253 and MP 265. The topography is characterized by the Columbia River to the south of the highway and mountains and hills rising to the north. Figure 4 shows the topography seen from the overlook near MP 263. This photo shows the confluence of the Okanogan River as it flows into the Columbia River. This is also the physiographic boundary between the Columbia Plateau, seen at the right, and the Okanogan Highlands that rise, out of view in this photo, to the left.



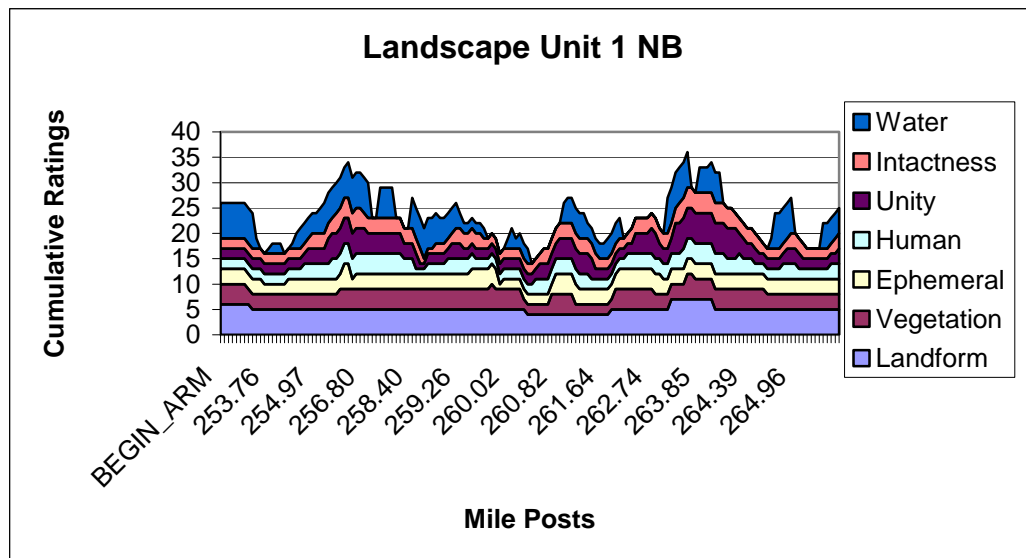
**Figure 11. Topography in Landscape Unit 1**

The character of the landform changes as the road curves to the north at the junction of SR 97 and SR 17 at MP 265.1. Percentages of scenic classifications are found in Figure 12.

Not Scenic	31.58%
Scenic	29.80%
Highly Scenic	20.82%
Exceptionally Scenic	17.80%

**Figure 12. Percentage of each scenic classification in Landscape Unit 1 Northbound**

Landscape Unit 1 Northbound has views of mountains and water that are exceptionally scenic. Vegetation in this area consists of both native scrub-steppe plants such as sagebrush and rabbitbrush, and orchards that flower in spring. This ephemeral quality is incorporated in the ratings. There are two cities in this landscape unit that lower the human, unity and intactness scores on average, but there are also locations where these scores are above average.



**Figure 13. Cumulative values rated by milepost, Landscape Unit 1 Northbound**

68.42% of this landscape unit, viewed traveling northbound, qualifies as “scenic” or better. There are locations that are “exceptionally scenic” and “highly scenic.”

### 3.1.1.2. Southbound

Ratings in Landscape Unit 1 are higher when traveling southbound. Vegetation between MP 265.13 and MP 265.01, and MP 263 and MP 261.73 was rated at five, a “highly scenic” rating. In much of the corridor, vegetation was rated at 4, a “scenic” rating. Figure 14 shows the percentages of each scenic classification for the southbound experience.

Not Scenic	9.02%
Scenic	17.26%
Highly Scenic	44.42%
Exceptionally Scenic	29.30%

Figure 14. Percentage of each scenic classification in Landscape Unit 1 Southbound

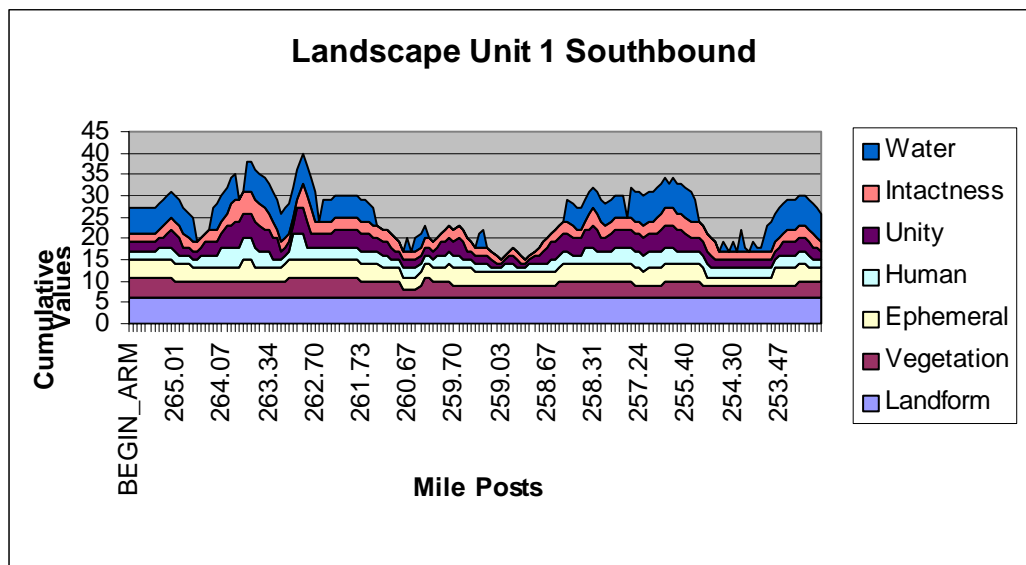


Figure 15. Cumulative Values for all values rated by milepost, Landscape Unit 1 Southbound

There are only short distances of less than a mile where the visual quality is not rated as “scenic,” at a minimum, in this southbound experience of Landscape Unit 1. Much of the unit is classified as “highly scenic” (25-29) or “exceptionally scenic” (30 or better).

### 3.1.2. Landscape Unit 2

#### 3.1.2.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 2 is defined by hills rising to the east of the road and the Okanogan River to the west. In this Landscape Unit, there are occasional views of the river. Landscape Unit 2 runs from MP 265.1 to MP 272.5. Typical topography is shown in Figure 5 at MP 266.68.





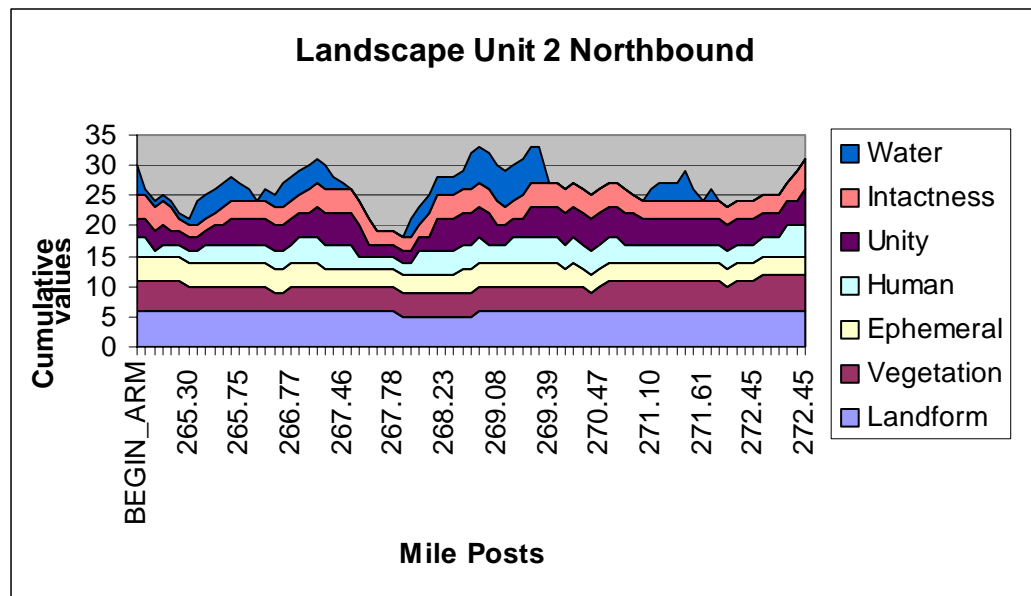
**Figure 16. Typical landforms in Landscape Unit 2**

Figure 17 shows the percentage of scenic classifications for the northbound views along Landscape Unit 2.

Not Scenic	4.24%
Scenic	18.11%
Highly Scenic	54.96%
Exceptionally Scenic	22.69%

**Figure 17. Percentage of scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 2 Northbound.**

The mountains in this area are very memorable with an average rating of 5.89 out of a possible 7 – most ratings are 6. There are frequent glimpses of water making ratings for water “highly scenic.” The orchards that bloom in spring and fruit in fall, as well as the rolls of hay in fields give this area a “highly scenic” ephemeral rating.



**Figure 18. Cumulative values for views by mile post for Landscape Unit 2 Northbound**

As seen in Figure 18, the visual quality dips in only one location below a minimum of “scenic” because of lowered human, unity, and intactness scores and the lack of water in the view.

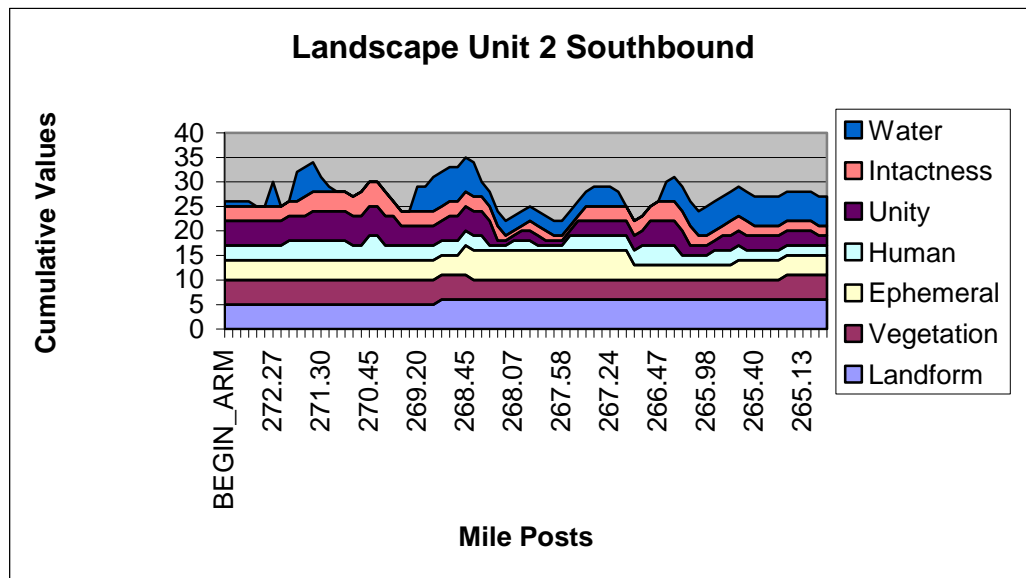
### 3.1.2.2. Southbound

The visual ratings are higher when traveling southbound than they are when traveling northbound in this landscape unit because views of the Okanogan River are more frequent. Figure 19 shows the percentages of the scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 2 Southbound.

Not Scenic	0
Scenic	9.16%
Highly Scenic	74.99%
Exceptionally Scenic	15.85%

**Figure 19. Percentage of scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 2 - Southbound**

While driving through this landscape unit southbound, most views are exceptionally scenic or highly scenic. Water views peak at the maximum rating of 7.



**Figure 20. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 2 Southbound**

There are exceptionally scenic and highly scenic views. One hundred percent of this landscape unit contains “scenic” or better ratings.

A notable cultural phenomenon in Landscape Unit 2 is the presence of the satellite dishes that are used for communication, currently run by Veristar. Visually, they stand out in this rural landscape, yet they do not encroach.





**Figure 21. Satellite dishes seen from MP 266.68**

An old chain-link fence surrounds a cemetery west of the highway at MP 263. The human, unity and intactness ratings drop at this point and then rise again as the cemetery is no longer in view. Screening or replacement of the fence could improve these ratings in this location.

### **3.1.3. Landscape Unit 3**

#### **3.1.3.1. Northbound**

Landscape Unit 3, which runs from MP 272.5 to MP 274.3, bisects an area of ancient sand dunes and old-growth Ponderosa pines. This landscape unit has a forested character. These trees have colonized this sandy soil and have existed here before white settlers came. In much of the study area there is a feeling of prospect, or the ability to look out over long distances. In this Landscape Unit, there is a feeling of refuge and enclosure that is distinctly different from other sections of the corridor.



**Figure 22. Ponderosa pine forest and sand dunes in Landscape Unit 3.**

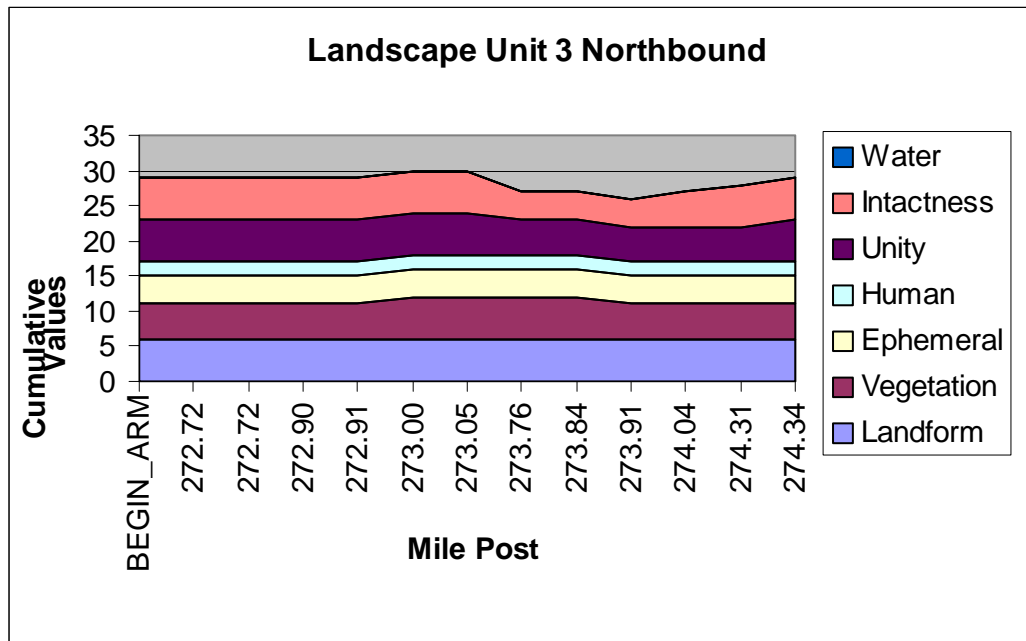
Northward, within this Landscape unit, the pines grow thicker. Figure 22 shows the northern end of Landscape Unit 3 with the characteristic Ponderosa pines.

Figure 23 shows the percentage of scenic classification in this landscape unit. All views are either “highly scenic” or “exceptionally scenic.” Landform, unity, and intactness all reach a peak of 6 (exceptionally scenic).

Not Scenic	0
Scenic	0
Highly Scenic	85.24%
Exceptionally Scenic	14.76%

**Figure 23. Scenic Ratings for Landscape Unit 3 – Northbound**

Figure 24 shows the cumulative values for this landscape unit. All values are above the “highly scenic” threshold of 25 cumulative points.



**Figure 24. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 3 Northbound**

Note that there are no water views when traveling northbound in Landscape Unit 3.

### **3.1.3.2. Southbound**

The view from the southbound lanes differs because the trees begin more abruptly from this direction of travel and the sense of enclosure is greater.



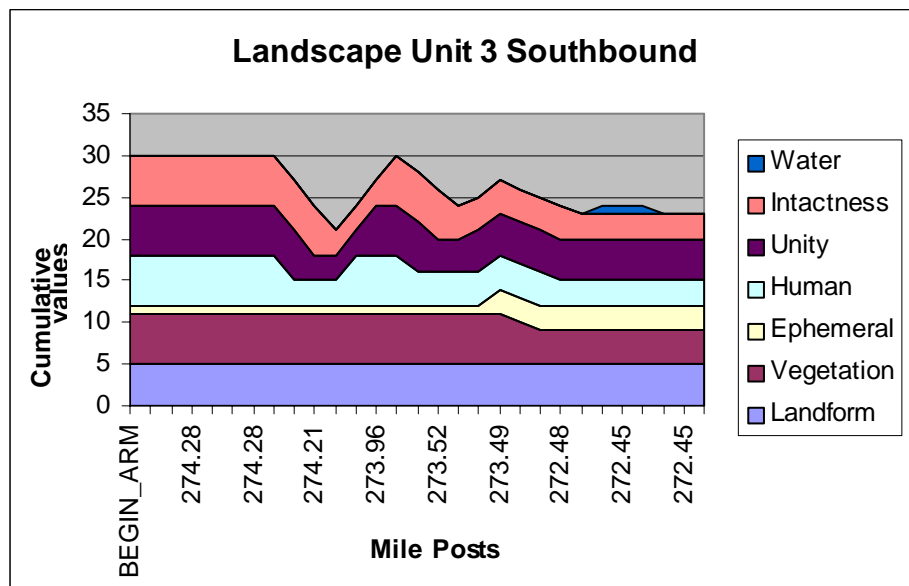
**Figure 25. Landscape Unit 3 northern boundary, view south.**

From this direction there is a slight dip in the ephemeral ratings because the grasses and seasonal flowers are less visible from this direction of travel – the pines dominate the view. Vegetation ratings average above 5 and have a peak of 6 through the first two-thirds of the landscape unit.

Not Scenic	0
Scenic	53.66%
Highly Scenic	14.24%
Exceptionally Scenic	32.09%

**Figure 26. Scenic Ratings for Landscape Unit 3 – Southbound**

Water views in Landscape Unit 3 are limited to a brief glimpse of the river on the right, at the southern end of the unit. All ratings are above the “scenic” threshold of 28 and approximately 50% are above the “highly scenic” rating of 25 as seen in Figure 27.



**Figure 27. Cumulative ratings for Landscape Unit 3 Southbound**

### 3.1.4. Landscape Unit 4

#### 3.1.4.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 4 runs from MP 274.3 to MP 278.7. The feeling of enclosure opens to a broad valley and the feeling of prospect returns. The highway is slightly elevated with hills rising a few hundred feet to the east. Figure 28 shows the view northbound with sand dunes covered in dune grass on the east slope. The view of the mountains and high benches to the north and west is dramatic.



Figure 28. Topography of Landscape Unit 4. View Northbound

Figure 29 shows the percentage of each scenic classification while traveling north in this landscape unit.

Not Scenic	3.93%
Scenic	72.58%
Highly Scenic	20.95%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

Figure 29. Percentages of each scenic classification in Landscape Unit 4 Northbound.

In only brief locations does the rating dip below the threshold score of 20. These areas are locations where human actions lower the human, unity, and intactness ratings.

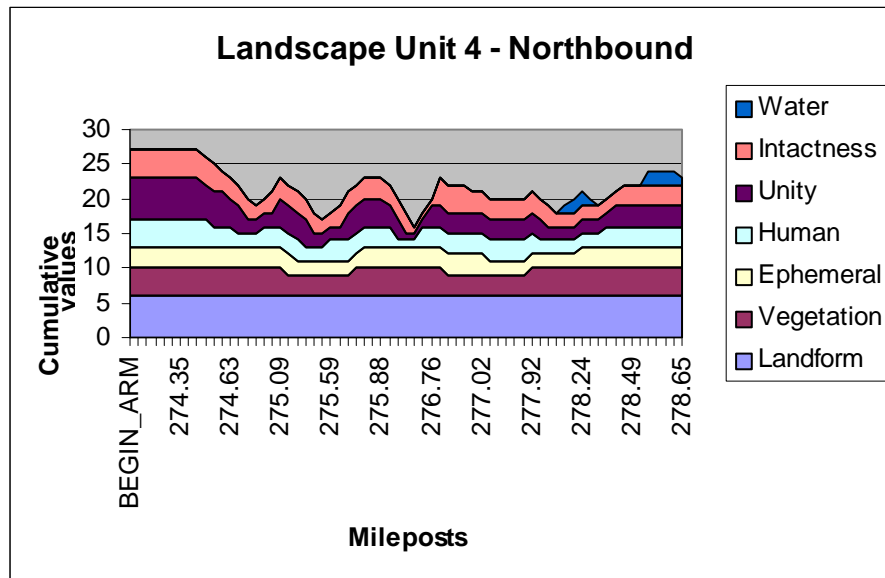


Figure 30. Cumulative values for factors in Landscape Unit 4 Northbound.

### 3.1.4.2. Southbound

Landscape Unit 4 Southbound runs from MP 278.65 to MP 274.28. In this landscape unit, as you drive southbound, the mountains rise on the left. The Okanogan River is in the distance to the west and can only be viewed briefly in the northern end of the landscape unit. High terraces are seen on the hills to the west, beyond the river. Figure 31 shows the topography of this landscape unit.



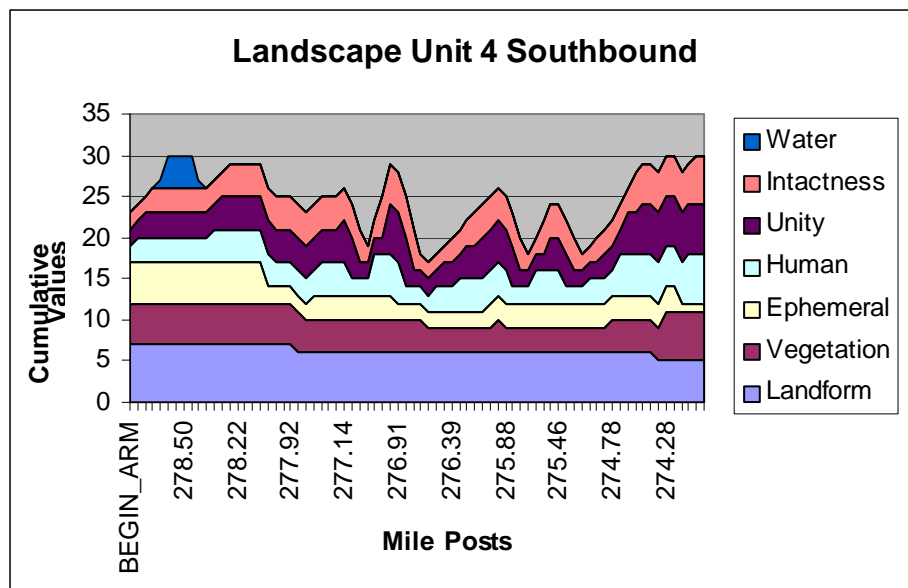
**Figure 31. Landscape Unit 4, view southbound**

This landscape unit contains views that are “scenic” or better along 94.44% of its length as seen in Figure 32.

Not Scenic	5.56%
Scenic	30.16%
Highly Scenic	52.79%
Exceptionally Scenic	11.49%

**Figure 32. Percentages in each scenic classification in Landscape Unit 4 Southbound.**

Figure 33 shows the cumulative values for the factors in this landscape unit. As in the northbound view, the ratings dip because of the human, unity, and intactness ratings.



**Figure 33. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 4 Southbound.**



### 3.1.5. Landscape Unit 5

Landscape Unit 5 is the longest landscape unit in the study area. It runs from MP 278.7 to MP 293.2 and encompasses the cities of Okanogan and Omak. The highway again crosses the Okanogan River here, adjacent to the site of the Omak Stampede. A broad valley to the west and mountains rising to the east characterizes the landscape here. The plateau to the west becomes more dramatic in this landscape unit. Views here of native shrub-steppe vegetation are excellent

#### 3.1.5.1. Northbound

Traveling north, human impacts become more visible and frequent. Views of the industrial areas around Okanogan and Omak and the strip-mall and fast-food development at the junction of SR 97 and SR 215 lower the human, unity, and intactness ratings for over one-third of this landscape unit.



**Figure 34. View north from MP 286.44 toward Malott**

Although human impacts increase, this landscape unit still has scenic classifications of “scenic” or better along 62.17% of its length.

Not Scenic	37.83%
Scenic	36.63%
Highly Scenic	18.58%
Exceptionally Scenic	6.95%

**Figure 35. Scenic values for Landscape Unit 5 Northbound**

As seen in Figure 36, landform, vegetation, and ephemeral ratings remain consistently high with a slight dip at MP 288. The spike seen near the northern end of the landscape unit is where the road crosses the Okanogan River again and the Stampede site can be seen to the right.

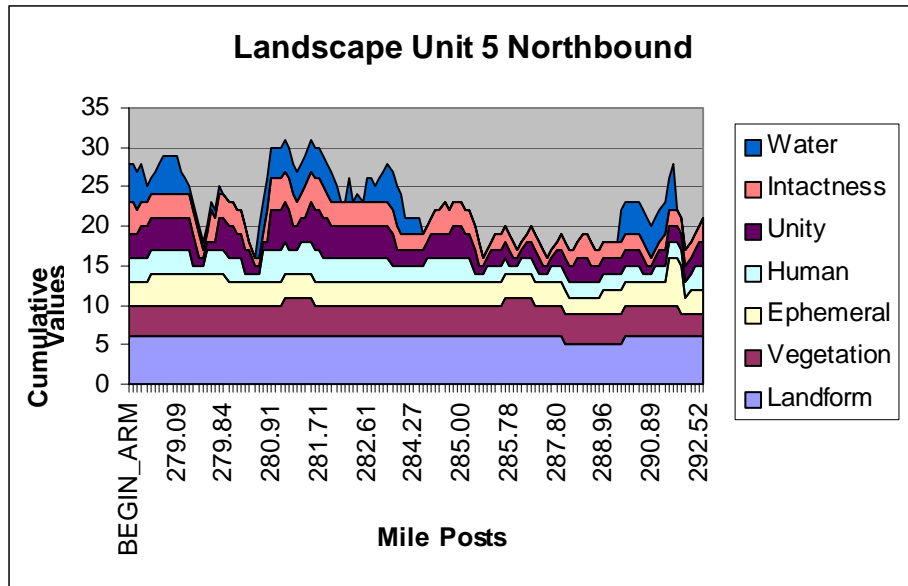


Figure 36. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 5 Northbound

### 3.1.5.2. Southbound

Chiliwist Creek Canyon is visible from the southbound direction of travel. The canyon empties into the Okanogan and sits above the ancient ice age flood terrace. This can be seen in the distance in Figure 38.

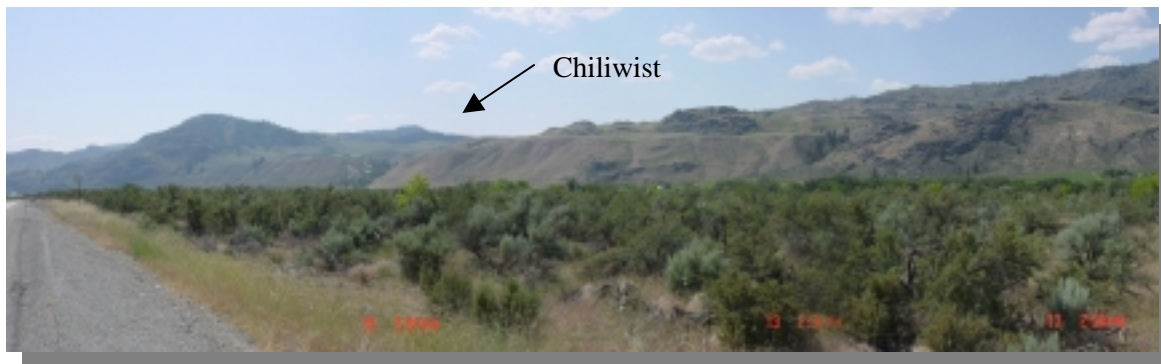


Figure 37. Landform typical of Landscape Unit 5 southbound viewed from MP 286.44.

East of Okanogan, at the intersection of SR 20 westbound with SR 97, there is an increase in development. A hotel can be seen at the right in Figure 39.



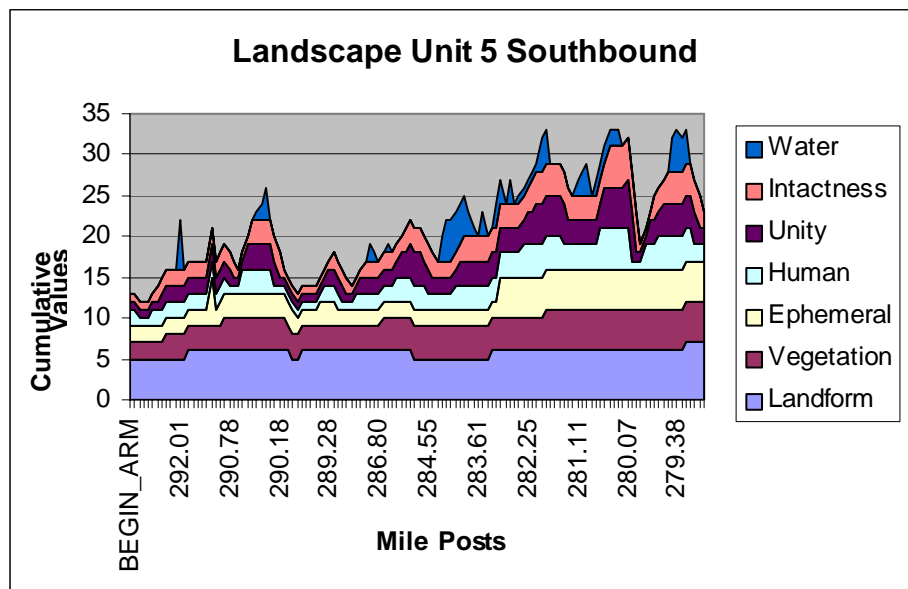
Figure 38. View south from MP 282 of Landscape Unit 5

This landscape unit is one where the views northbound and southbound differ. A greater number of visual encroachments can be seen from the southbound lanes of travel. In this landscape unit, 46.79% of the views are classified as “scenic” or better, as seen in Figure 40.

Not Scenic	53.21%
Scenic	18.12%
Highly Scenic	20.29%
Exceptionally Scenic	8.38%

**Figure 39. Percentages of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 5 Southbound**

The chart in Figure 40 shows the cumulative values for this landscape unit. Scenic values are higher in the southern reach of the landscape unit – farther from the cities of Okanogan and Omak. At the southern border of Landscape Unit 5, landform values reach 7, where Chiliwist Creek Canyon can clearly be seen.



**Figure 40. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 5 Southbound**

As seen in Figure 40, all views in the southern end of the landscape unit are above the “scenic” threshold of 20.

### 3.1.6. Landscape Unit 6

#### 3.1.6.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 6 runs from MP 293.2 to MP 294.7. This landscape unit is characterized by an open valley just north of Omak, seen in Figure 41.





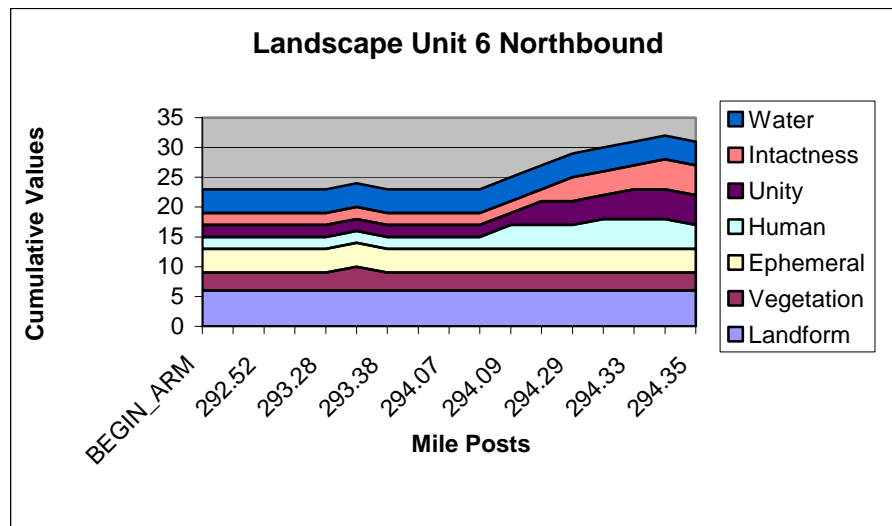
**Figure 41. Landscape Unit 6 view northbound from MP 294.6**

When traveling northbound, the development around Omak is not as visible as it is when traveling southbound. All views in this northbound view are classified as “scenic” or better.

Not Scenic	0
Scenic	81.87%
Highly Scenic	1.23%
Exceptionally Scenic	16.90%

**Figure 42. Percentages in scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 6 Northbound.**

Figure 43 shows the increase in scenic quality in the northern reach of this landscape unit. However all views are above the “scenic” threshold of 20.



**Figure 43. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 6 Northbound**

### **3.1.6.2. Southbound**

There are wide sweeping vistas in Landscape Unit 6 southbound. As the traveler approaches Omak, industrial development and large signs on private land decrease scores for human, unity, and intactness. The view seen in Figure 44 is from MP 294.66, before development is seen.



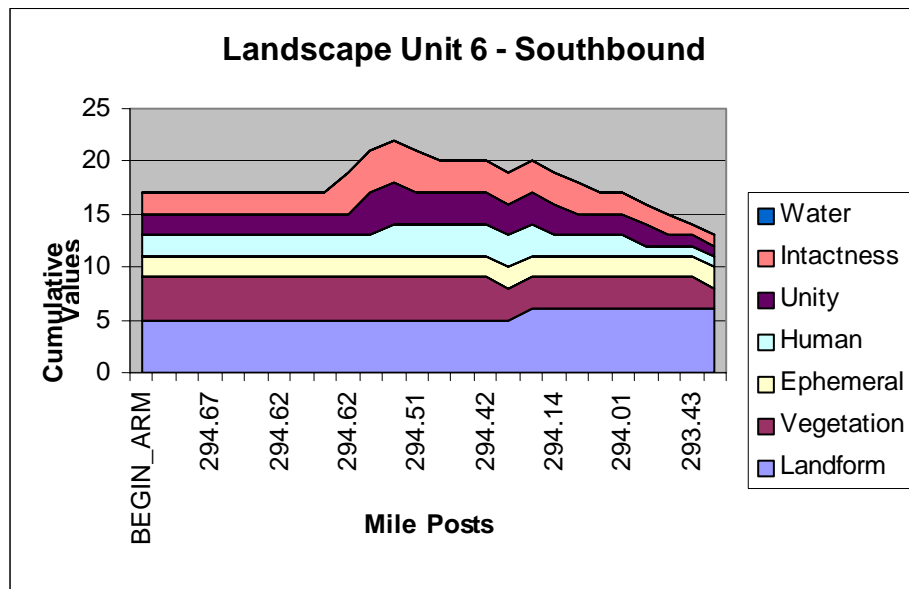
**Figure 44. View southbound from MP 294.66 Landscape Unit 6.**

There are no “highly scenic” or “exceptionally scenic” views from the southbound perspective within this landscape unit. However, there are “scenic views.” Figure 45 shows the percentages in these categories.

Not Scenic	88.58%
Scenic	11.42%
Highly Scenic	0
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 45. Percentages in scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 6 Southbound.**

There are no water views within this landscape unit southbound. The lack of water limits the scores in this evaluation. In addition, the distance to the mountains makes them less dominant in the view until the southern end of the landscape unit.



**Figure 46. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 6 Southbound.**

### 3.1.7. Landscape Unit 7

Landscape Unit 7 begins when the wave-like rocks, to the east, above the town of Riverside are revealed when traveling northbound. This Landscape Unit runs from MP 294.7 to MP 300.5 where the form of the rock is no longer discernable from the northbound lanes. This unit has some of the most spectacular scenery in the corridor, as seen in Figure 47.



**Figure 47. Wave-like mountains near Riverside.**

These mountains that lean, as they are described by a tribal elder, are unique and distinctive and rate the highest landform score of 7. Figure 48 shows the view of the entry to McLoughlin Canyon from MP300.12. This canyon is of historic significance and an additional view of this area is found in Appendix B.



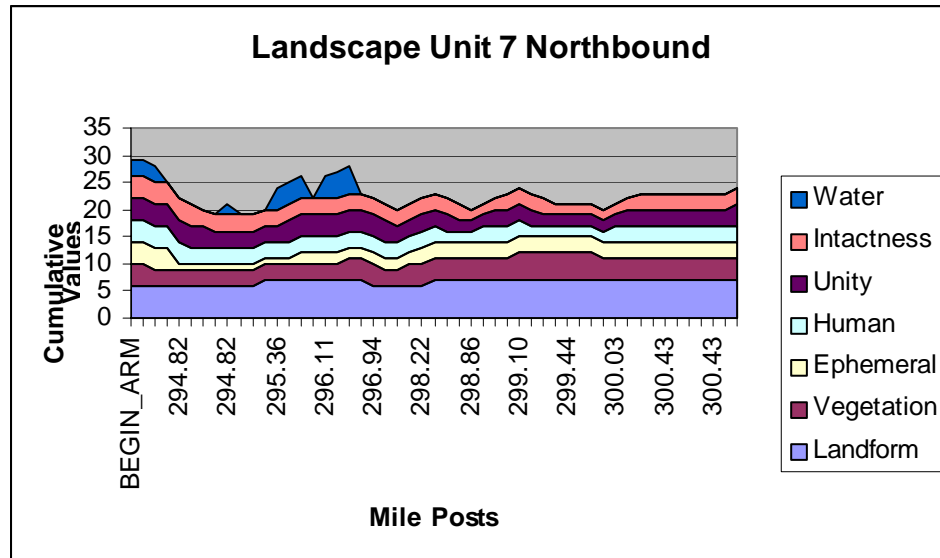
**Figure 48. McLoughlin Canyon as seen from SR 97 at MP 298**

Figure 49 shows the percentages in each scenic classification. Subjectively, this landscape unit has one of the most memorable views in the corridor, however it does not score highly because of the limited vegetation, the lack of water and the average ratings for human, unity, and intactness. The landform is spectacular.

Not Scenic	1.46%
Scenic	73.56%
Highly Scenic	24.98%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 49. Percentages in scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 7 Northbound.**

Figure 49 shows that 98.54% of this landscape unit is of “scenic” or better visual quality. The cumulative ratings in Figure 50 show that almost all the corridor is above the threshold score of 20.



**Figure 50. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 7 Northbound.**

### 3.1.7.1. Southbound

The southbound view in this area is less dramatic than the view from the northbound lanes. The mountains to the east, so dramatic when seen from the south, are seen as folds with vegetation lining the depressions. The town of Riverside is seen in the distance in Figure 51.



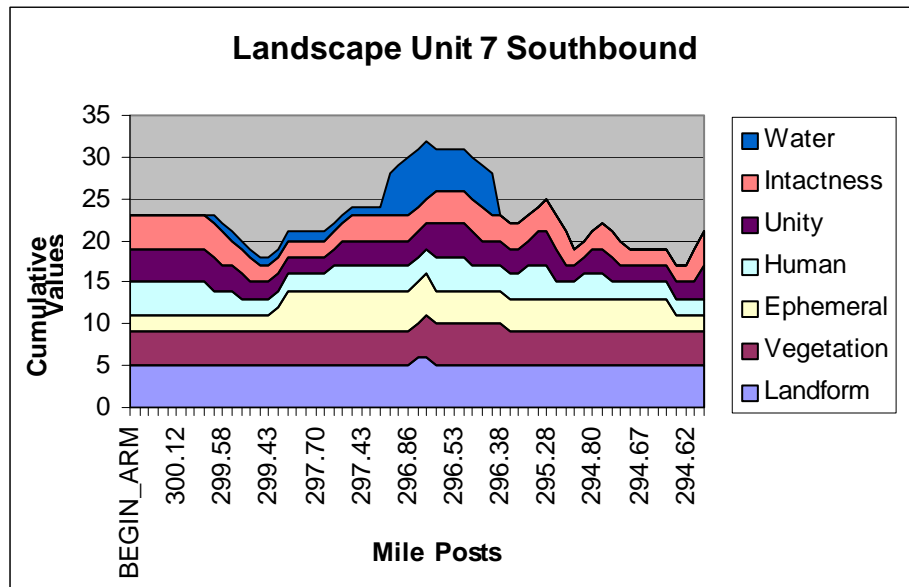
**Figure 51. Riverside and its mountain backdrop seen in Landscape Unit 7 Southbound.**

Figure 52 shows the percentages of each scenic classification as seen from the southbound view. Here, 59.09% of the landscape unit has ratings of “scenic” or better.

Not Scenic	40.91%
Scenic	48.45%
Highly Scenic	3.93%
Exceptionally Scenic	6.71%

**Figure 52 Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 7 Southbound.**

Where the river can be seen, the scenic rating jumps to ‘exceptionally scenic.’ The ephemeral ratings are low in the north and south of this landscape unit. In the south, it is because a non-native, “baby’s breath” (*Gypsophila paniculata*), has invaded the sagebrush community.



**Figure 53. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 7 Southbound**

There are limited areas where the ratings dip below the threshold score of 20 as seen in Figure 53.

### 3.1.8. Landscape Unit 8

#### 3.1.8.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 8 runs from MP 300.5 to MP 304.2. The landform is characterized by granite mountains that rise on the west. In this Landscape Unit, the river flows behind the mountains to the east and is not visible from the road. Because the mountain rises so steeply to the west, this landscape unit has dramatic mountain views.



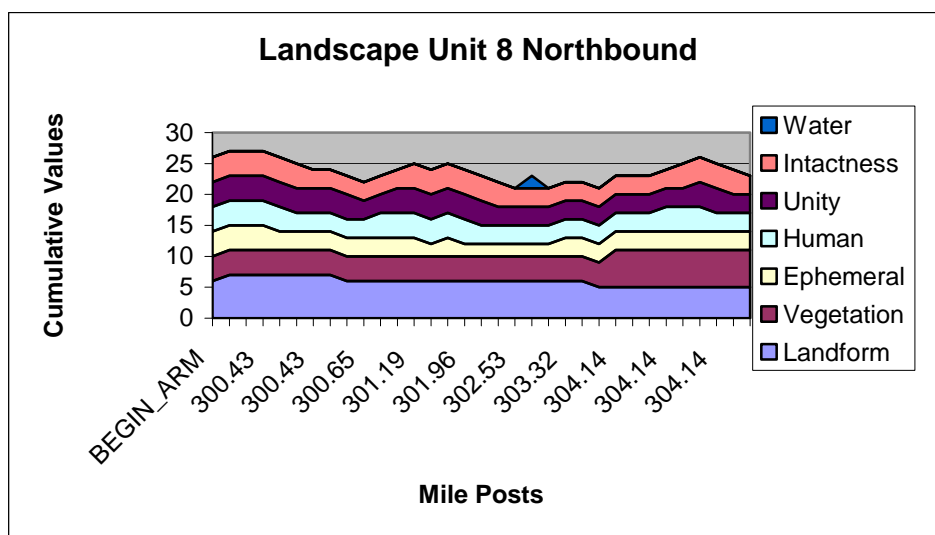
**Figure 54. MP 302 view North**

The land to the east rolls gently to mountains. It is the nearby mountains on the west that characterize this landscape unit. All views in this landscape unit, northbound, are “scenic” or “highly scenic.”

Not Scenic	0
Scenic	67.47%
Highly Scenic	32.53%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 55. Percentages in scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 8 Northbound**

Figure 56 shows the chart of this northbound stretch of highway. All Views are above the threshold score of 20.



**Figure 56. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 8 Northbound.**

### **3.1.8.2. Southbound**

From the southbound lanes of travel, the mountains rise on the right. They are memorable and rate a score of 6. This view can be seen in Figure 57.





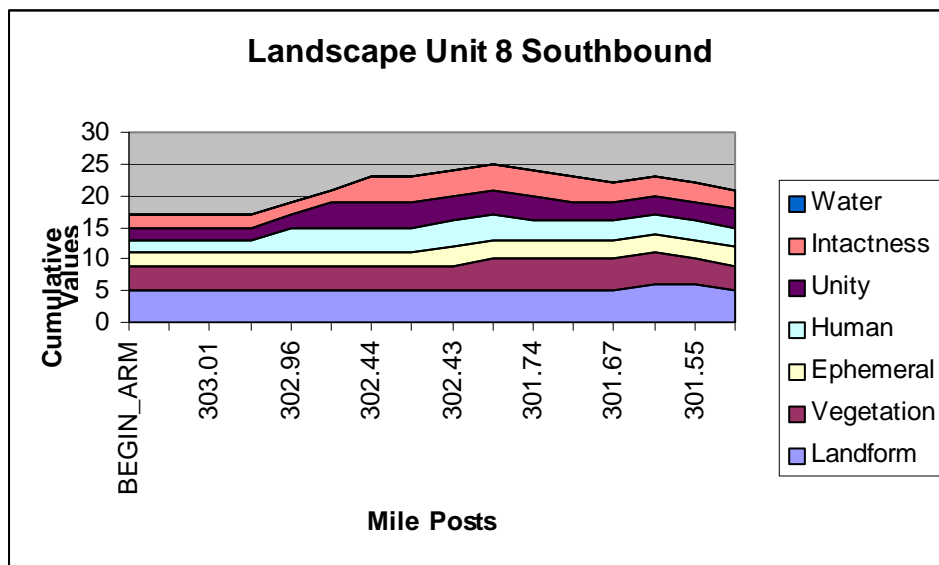
**Figure 57. Landform in Landscape Unit 8, view southbound.**

As seen in Figure 58, 76.69% of this southbound view of Landscape Unit 8 has scenic classifications of “scenic” or “highly scenic.”

Not Scenic	23.31%
Scenic	70.50%
Highly Scenic	6.19%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 58. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 8 Southbound.**

The chart in Figure 59 shows the scenic quality along the landscape unit. The views from the north of the mountain to the west are not as dramatic as those from the south. Landform ratings are 5 and there is no water present.



**Figure 59. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 8 Southbound.**

### 3.1.9. Landscape Unit 9

This landscape unit runs from MP 304.2 to MP 307.7 and has a forested character. This landscape unit is similar to Landscape Unit 3. There are old Ponderosa pines growing on ancient sand dunes and the trees provide a sense of enclosure in this area. However, beyond the pines the valley walls are close to the road, enforcing the sense of enclosure and refuge. There are homes to the east of the highway in this landscape unit.



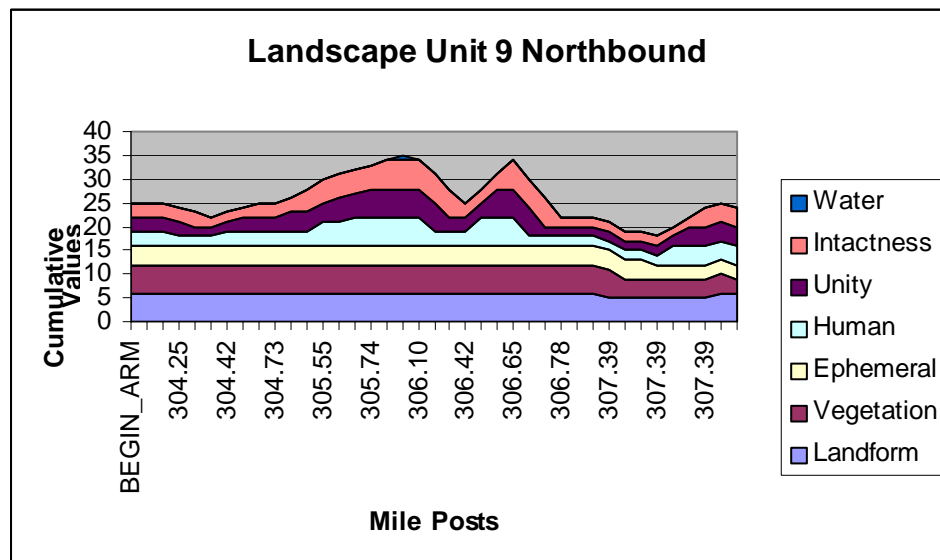
**Figure 60. Topography seen viewing northbound in Landscape unit 9.**

Because of the forested character and the nearby mountains 88.53% of this landscape unit has scenic classifications of “scenic” or better. The breakdown is seen in Figure 61.

Not Scenic	11.47%
Scenic	48.88%
Highly Scenic	25.51%
Exceptionally Scenic	14.13%

**Figure 61. Percentage in each scenic classification in Landscape Unit 9 Northbound.**

Except for one location at the site of an unscreened lumberyard, the scenic ratings for this landscape unit, northbound are all above the “scenic” threshold of 20 in the chart in Figure 62.



**Figure 62. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 9 Northbound**



### 3.1.9.1. Southbound

The view in Figure 63 is from MP 307 looking south. Power transmission lines and phone lines lower the scenic ratings along this corridor. There is a view of an ephemeral pond, which spikes the water rating.



Figure 63. View from MP 307 view south

Cumulative scenic classifications for this landscape unit are 97.04% equal to or better than “scenic.” The Ponderosa pines are found only on sand dunes along this corridor – they are a special environment.

Not Scenic	2.96%
Scenic	35.20%
Highly Scenic	59.22%
Exceptionally Scenic	2.62%

Figure 64. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 9 Southbound.

Ratings for the southbound view are higher than for the northbound view in this landscape unit. The trees begin more abruptly, and have more impact when approached from the north. The small lake west of the road can be seen when driving southbound. It is less visible from the northbound lanes.

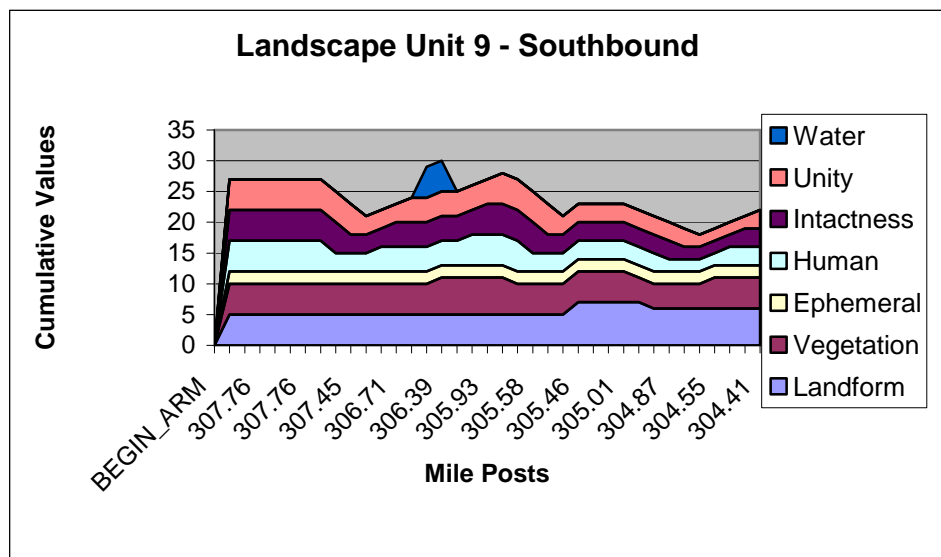


Figure 65. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 9 Southbound.

### 3.1.10. Landscape Unit 10

#### 3.1.10.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 10 runs from MP 307.7 to MP 315.8. In this section of the highway, the Ponderosas are no longer present beside the road. The view opens up again, but there is a gradual slope up to the west and mountains rise more dramatically on the east. This landscape unit has a rural character classification. There are occasional homes, a mill site, and an irrigation district settlement pond with accompanying pumps and pipes. In Landscape Unit 10, there are good views of White Stone Mountain to the northwest, seen in Figure 66.



**Figure 66. White Stone Mountain in the background.**

The power and phone lines disrupt the view, but otherwise this rural landscape is scenic. Figure 67 shows typical topography in this landscape unit.



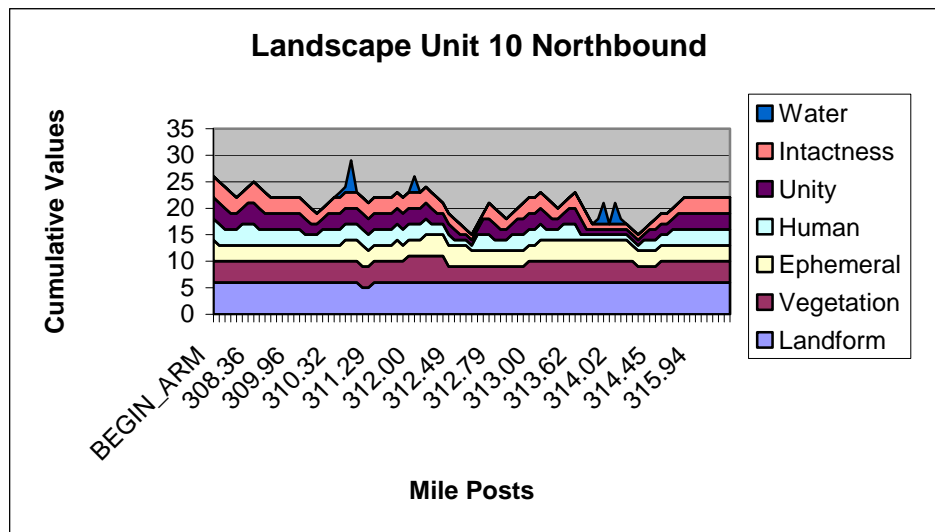
**Figure 67. Topography seen from MP 310 viewing northbound.**

Scenery here shows many impacts from human use, but the effect is scenic. There are wheat fields, orchards, and mountains in the distance.

Not Scenic	42.39%
Scenic	73.76%
Highly Scenic	8.08%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 68. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 10 Northbound.**

There are occasional views of water in this landscape unit. There are two locations where human impacts encroach; one is an irrigation district pumping station. Screening vegetation or a berm would improve those ratings.



**Figure 69. Cumulative Values for Landscape Unit 10 Northbound**

### **3.1.10.2. Southbound**

Figure 70, taken from MP 308.9 viewing south, shows the northern exit of McLoughlin Canyon on the right. This landscape unit is characterized by a broad valley with mountains in the distance.



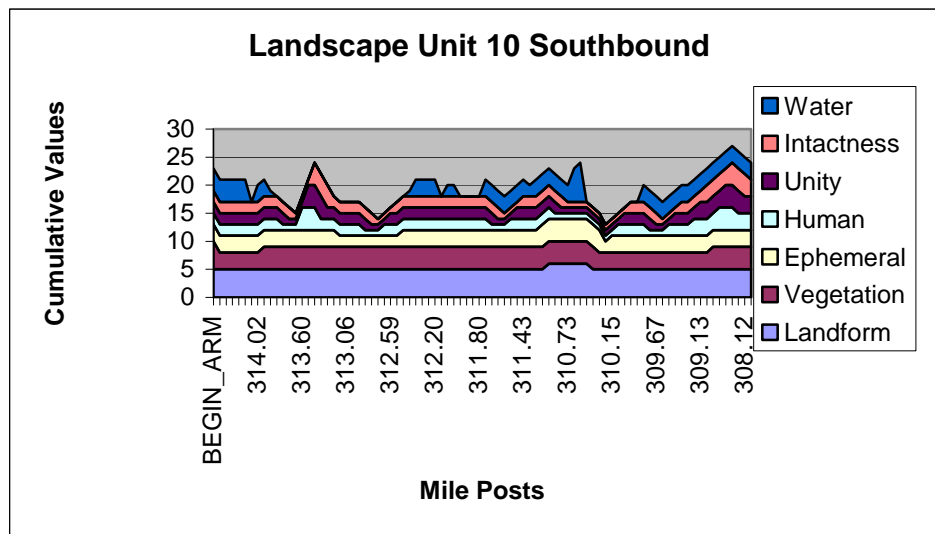
**Figure 70. MP 309.8 view Southbound**

Over fifty-seven percent of this landscape unit has a scenic classification of “scenic” or “highly scenic.” The breakdown can be seen in Figure 71.

Not Scenic	42.39%
Scenic	53.54%
Highly Scenic	4.07%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 71. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 10 Southbound.**

The Okanogan River adds significantly to views in this landscape unit. Where scenic ratings dip, there are encroaching human impacts, which also affect the unity and intactness scores.



**Figure 72. Cumulative values in Landscape Unit 10 Southbound.**

### 3.1.11. Landscape Unit 11

Landscape Unit 11 runs from MP 315.8 to MP 318.1. SR 97 runs through the development around the city of Tonasket, which lies in a valley with mountains on either side. The mountain

on the west is closer to the road and defines this landscape unit. There are agricultural fields in the valley. Figure 73 shows the topography typical of this landscape unit.



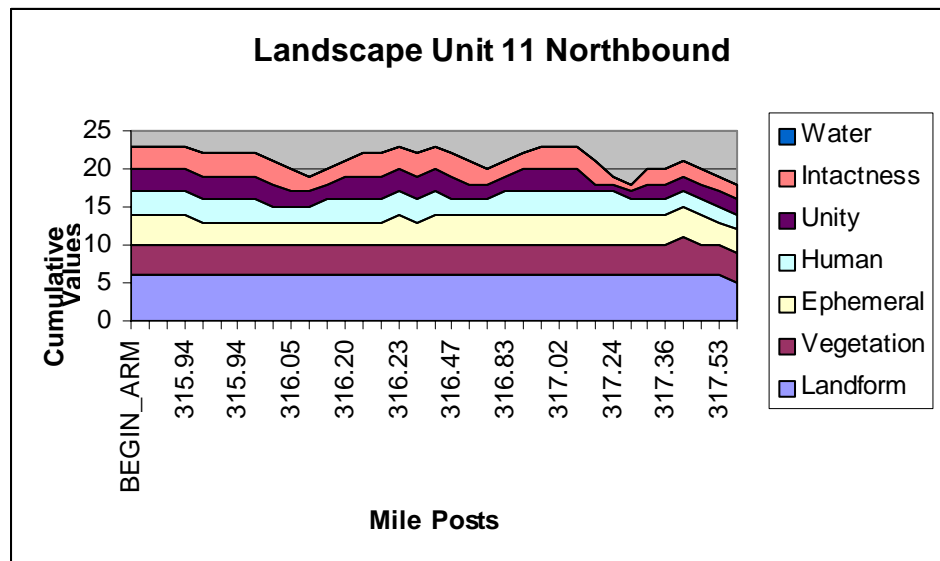
**Figure 73. Typical topography in Landscape Unit 11 Northbound.**

This landscape unit is rural in character. There are farms and orchards lining the highway. The presence of the orchards, which bloom in spring and fruit in fall, enhance the ephemeral ratings. Figure 74 shows the scenic classification distribution:

Not Scenic	12.43%
Scenic	87.57%
Highly Scenic	0
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 74. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 11 Northbound.**

Over 87% of this landscape unit is rated as “scenic.” Landform is consistently rated at 6 until the last data entry. There are no water views.



**Figure 75. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 11 Northbound.**

### **3.1.11.1. Southbound**

The topography to the west, in this landscape unit, can clearly be seen in Figure 76.



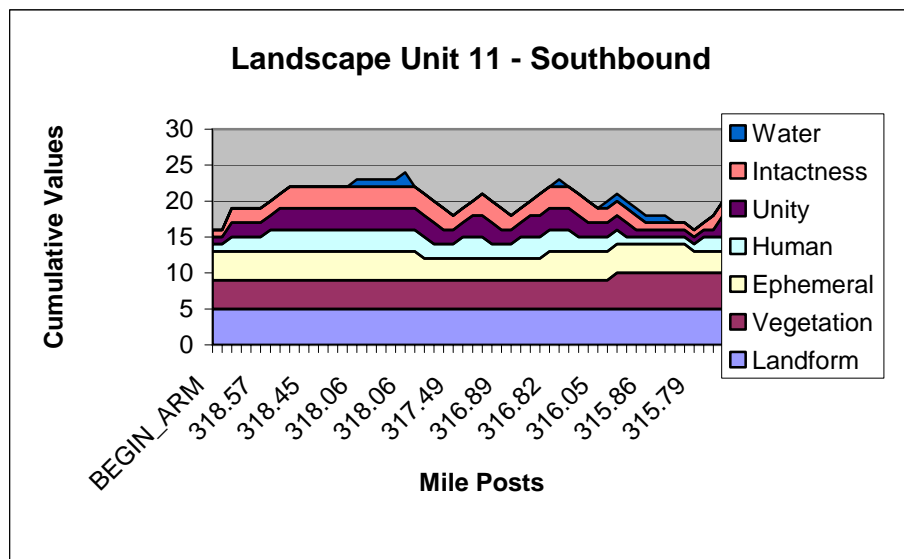


**Figure 76. Topography at MP 318.10 viewing southbound**

There are no “highly scenic” or “exceptionally scenic” views in this landscape unit, but nearly half of it is “scenic.”

Not Scenic	51.90%
Scenic	48.10%
Highly Scenic	0
Exceptionally Scenic	0

Where ratings fall below the threshold score of 20, it is because of low human, unity, and intactness ratings. Landform, vegetation, and ephemeral ratings are consistently above average. There are water views intermittently in the distance.



**Figure 77. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 11 Southbound**

### 3.1.12. Landscape Unit 12

#### 3.1.12.1. Northbound

North of Tonasket, the mountains rise more dramatically to the east and mountains can be seen in the distance to the north. This section of SR 97 is bordered by orchards, has a rural character, and contains the community of Ellisforde.

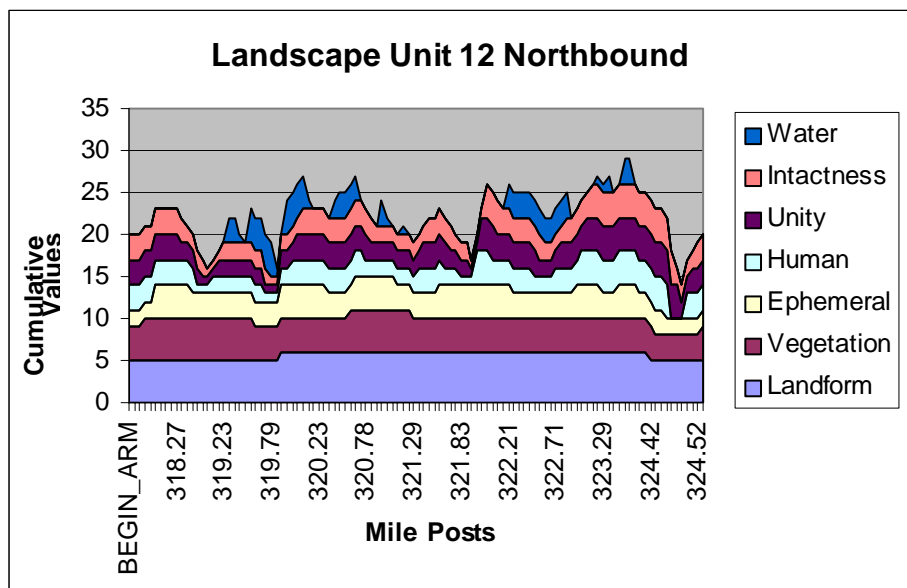


**Figure 78. View northbound from MP 319 in Landscape Unit 12.**

Not Scenic	10.75%
Scenic	60.49%
Highly Scenic	28.76%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 79. Percentage of scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 12 Northbound.**

Water views are frequent and reach a peak of 4 as the Okanogan flows to the west of the highway. Landform, vegetation, and ephemeral ratings are generally high. One notable encroachment is at MP 323.62. This location lowers ratings significantly.



**Figure 80. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 12 Northbound.**

Scenic ratings can be improved in this landscape unit by the addition of screening vegetation, berms, or site improvements.

### **3.1.12.2. Southbound**

The Cascade and Columbia Railroad line runs along the highway to the west. The tracks can be seen adjacent to the road in Figure 81.



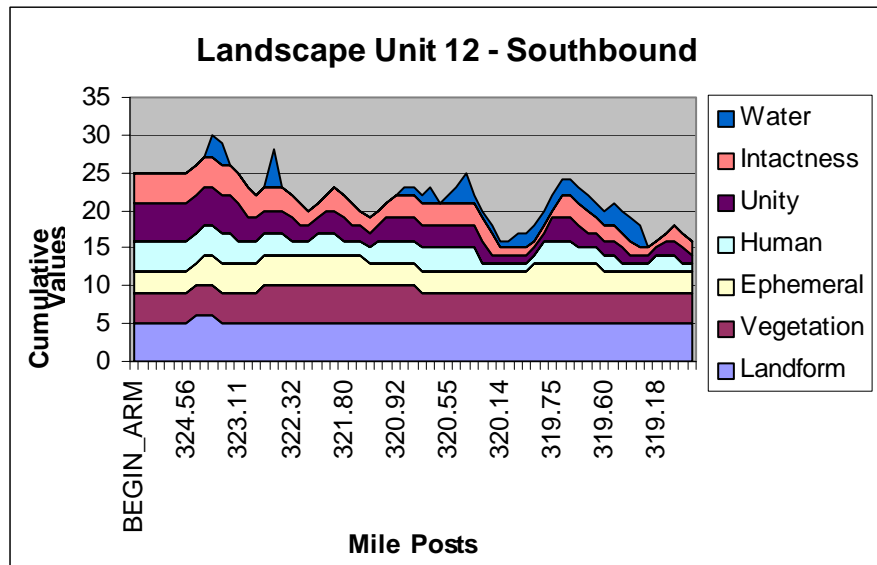
**Figure 81. View southbound from MP 322 in Landscape Unit 12.**

Views from this direction of travel are higher than from the northbound lanes. The encroachments are less visible. Over 95% of the landscape unit is classified as “scenic” or better.

Not Scenic	8.95%
Scenic	44.60%
Highly Scenic	44.44%
Exceptionally Scenic	2.01%

**Figure 82. Percentage of scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 12 Southbound.**

There is one location where the classification is “exceptionally scenic.” This is a site where human impacts are low, water is present, and the landform rating is six. As is typical along this corridor, the natural environment rates consistently high. Human encroachments lower that rating.



**Figure 83. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 12 Southbound.**

### **3.1.13. Landscape Unit 13**

#### **3.1.13.1. Northbound**

Mount Hull is the dominant landscape feature in this landscape unit. A fire in 2001 burned much of the Ponderosa forest on the mountain. There is a relict flume running along the base of the



mountain on the west. This landscape unit runs from MP 324.5 to MP 330.6 and contains very vivid views of the granite face of Mount Hull and ends at the bridge crossing the Okanogan River.



**Figure 84. Mt Hull rock formations with orchard below, MP 325**

Figures 84 and 85 show the dramatic granite step-formations on Mount Hull. Landform ratings are 6 and 7 in this landscape unit. The abandoned and parked vehicles in the foreground partially show an example of the type of human encroachments that lower the human, unity and intactness ratings along this corridor.



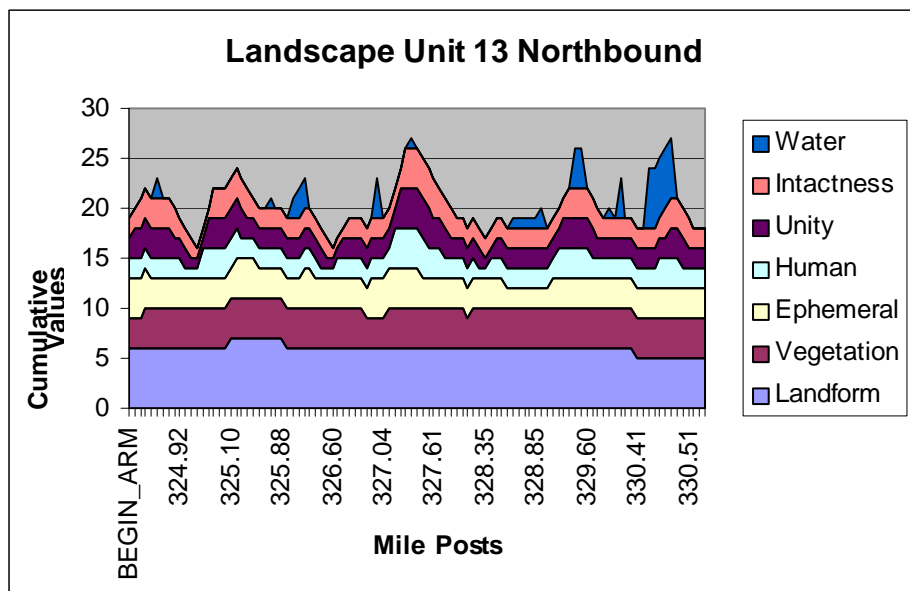
**Figure 85. Topography Northbound at MP 325 with Mt Hull in background.**

This landscape unit has the potential to be highly scenic. Landform is very memorable. As seen in the breakdown in Figure 86, 41.76% of this landscape unit is rated “scenic” and “highly scenic.” It is the human, unity, and intactness ratings which prevent it from reaching its potential.

Not Scenic	58.24%
Scenic	35.74%
Highly Scenic	6.01%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 86. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 13 Northbound.**

The chart of this landscape shows peaks and valleys of scenic character with a strong baseline of landform, vegetation, and ephemeral factors.



**Figure 87. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 13 Northbound.**

### 3.1.13.2. Southbound

In addition to the dominant view of Mount Hull in this landscape unit, the road travels along the eastern shore of the Okanogan River and it encompasses Driscoll Island. There are frequent views of the river in this landscape unit. Figure 88 shows Driscoll Island with Ellemham Mountain Road winding up the mountain in the background.



**Figure 88. Driscoll Island with Ellemham Road climbing the mountain, MP 329.5**

From this direction of travel, human encroachment is not as dominant in the viewshed. Figure 89 shows a vegetable farm in the foreground and the flume running along the mountain in the background.



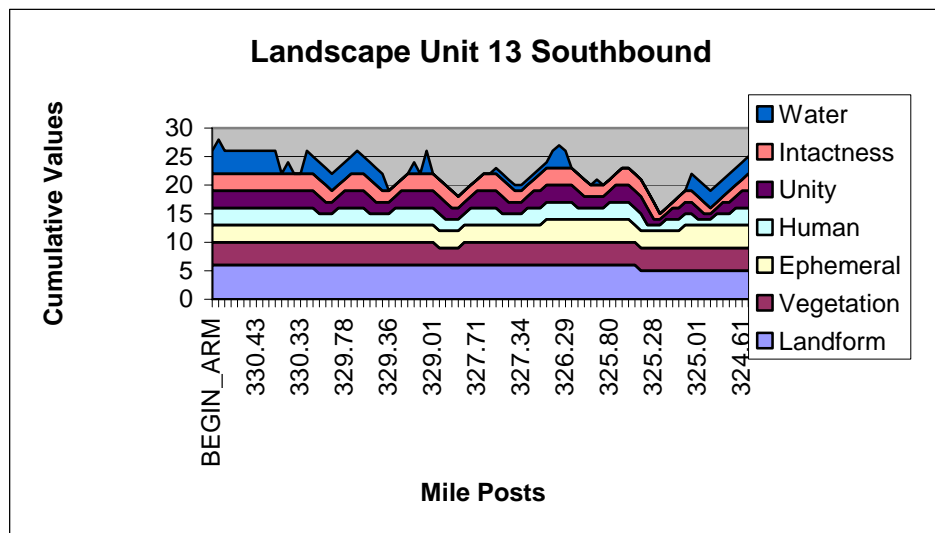
**Figure 89. View at MP 324.5 looking southwest**

From the southbound lanes, 92.1% of Landscape Unit 12 is classified as “scenic” or better. Figure 90 shows the breakdown of percentages in each scenic classification.

Not Scenic	7.90%
Scenic	59.89%
Highly Scenic	32.21%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 90. Percentage of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 13 Northbound.**

Landform values are high because of the presence of Mount Hull. There is water visible from the roadway throughout most of this landscape unit when traveling southbound. Ratings dip where human impacts lower the human, unity, and intactness ratings.



**Figure 91. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 13 Southbound.**



### 3.1.14. Landscape Unit 14

#### 3.1.14.1. Northbound

Landscape Unit 14 contains the city of Oroville and Lake Osoyoos. The road lies along the western shore of the lake and views of the lake are frequent, though often seen between orchards that lie between the road and the lake. Landscape Unit 14 begins at MP 330.6 and ends at the Oroville/Osoyoos Port of Entry at MP 336.48. Figure 92 shows the community gateway into downtown Oroville from the south.



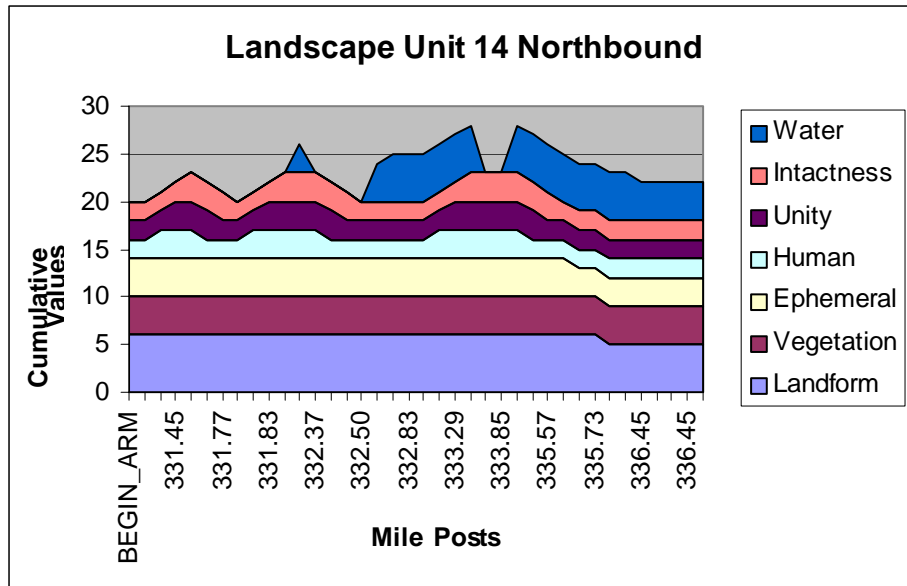
**Figure 92. Roadside character in Oroville.**

Once past Mount Hull, the visible mountains are more rounded and less dramatic. The landform rating, while still above average, dips to five. The town of Oroville has made an effort to enhance their streetscape by installing street trees, hanging flower baskets from light poles, and has added banners. These efforts provide corridor continuity and show signs of care – they boost the human, unity, and intactness ratings in the downtown area. Almost 82% of the northbound drive in this landscape unit is “scenic” or better. Figure 93 shows the breakdown of percentages in each scenic classification.

Not Scenic	18.24%
Scenic	44.05%
Highly Scenic	37.71%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 93. Percentages of scenic classifications in Landscape Unit 14 Northbound.**

Only the entry from the south into the downtown section of Oroville is below the “scenic” threshold of 20. Where Lake Osoyoos is visible, the ratings go up into the “highly scenic” classification. Figure 94 shows the cumulative scores for the northbound drive.



**Figure 94. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 14 Northbound.**

### 3.1.14.2. Southbound

This route begins at the Canadian-U.S. border. This is the gateway to the United States for people coming from Canada. As of 2002, a new border station is under construction. Because there is a good view of water at this location, the ratings are above what would be expected subjectively, this view qualifies as “scenic.”



**Figure 95. Border crossing at Oroville/Osoyoos.**



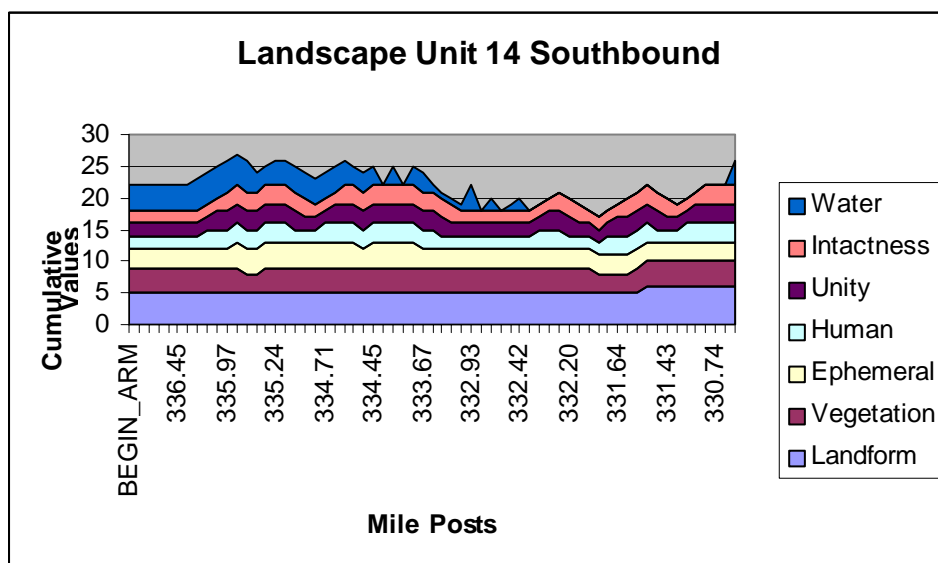
**Figure 96. View of southern end of downtown Oroville**

The photo in Figure 96 was taken near the point where the scenic classification changes from “scenic” to “not scenic” in this landscape unit.

Not Scenic	12.00%
Scenic	56.94%
Highly Scenic	31.06%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 97. Percentage of scenic classifications for Landscape Unit 14 Southbound.**

Eighty-eight percent of Landscape Unit 14 Southbound is classified as “scenic” or better. The areas to the south of Oroville have ratings below “scenic.” The exception is the bridge crossing the Okanogan River where water is visible. This can be seen in Figure 98.



**Figure 98. Cumulative values for Landscape Unit 14 Southbound.**

### 3.1.15. Landscape Unit 15

Landscape Unit 15 is located on State Route 215 from its beginning at the junction with SR 20, at MP 0, running through the downtown areas of Okanogan and Omak and ending at MP 6.4 at the intersection with SR 97 in Omak. The roadside character in this landscape unit is Semiurban. The built environment is dominant.



**Figure 99. SR 97 and SR 215 Intersection, view southwest.**

Figure 99 shows the end-point of SR 215, at MP 6.24, at its northern intersection with SR 97. This intersection is a hub of activity with gas stations, shopping, and restaurants. As seen in Figure 99, businesses have worked to landscape their sites and this improves the visual quality here. The photo in Figure 100 was taken in front of the Fire Hall Museum closer to the southern end of this landscape unit.



**Figure 100. View South from Fire Hall Museum and Pioneer Village, Okanogan**

Because of a problem with the equipment, no data were recorded for this six-mile section of town. Landform values ranged from five to four – where mature trees blocked the view of the mountains. In the southern end of the corridor, the Okanogan is visible along the park, located below and behind the trees on the left in Figure 100. Okanogan and Omak have banners and



street trees. The downtown sections of this route, and the museum-park complex, are “scenic.” Industrial areas between towns and on the outskirts are considered “not scenic.” Figure 101 shows the intersection of SR 215 and the SR 20 spur that connects to SR 97.



**Figure 101. SR 215-SR 20 Intersection view NE**

Ratings for the short spur are found in Figure 102. Areas where the river is visible are “scenic” and the river crossing is “highly scenic.”

Not Scenic	72.19%
Scenic	26.04%
Highly Scenic	1.78%
Exceptionally Scenic	0

**Figure 102. Percentages of scenic classifications on the SR 20 spur.**

Additional viewpoints were considered where it was deemed necessary to reflect the overall visual change within a Landscape Unit. These views can be found in Appendix B.

## 4. CONCLUSION

All landscape units had “scenic” and “highly scenic” views. Landscape Units 1 through 5, 6 north, 7 south, 9, and 12 all had “exceptionally scenic” views. Landscape Units 2 south, 3, and 8 north had views that were “scenic” or better throughout the landscape unit. Over seventy-seven percent of this corridor is classified as “scenic” or better. Most “exceptionally scenic” views were of landform or water. The geology of the region is one of its most scenic characteristics and this is easily viewed from SR 97. There are frequent views of the Columbia and Okanogan Rivers that are “highly scenic” and often “exceptionally scenic.” There is a diversity of vegetation types, ranging from old-growth Ponderosa pine and sage/bitterbrush stands, to riparian forests, fruit orchards, and agricultural fields. Ephemeral views include orchards in spring bloom and summer fruit, horses grazing in green fields, thunderheads, rolls of hay, and clear starry nights. Human elements such as old barns or rustic cabins occasionally provide highly scenic and picturesque views.

There are some human impacts that encroach on the views such as unscreened “junk” yards, irrigation settlement ponds, run-down buildings, and ubiquitous power and telephone poles and lines. These encroachments are generally of short duration within the landscape and in many cases could be mitigated through screening by vegetation or berms. Many towns along this route are in the process of planting street trees or hanging banners or flower baskets within the main business districts. These continuing improvements will help raise the human, unity, and intactness scores.

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

This corridor should be classified as a Washington State Scenic Byway.

## 6. REFERENCES

Federal Highway Administration, Office of Environmental Policy. 1988. *Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects*. FHWA-HI-88-054, US Department of Transportation.

Washington State Department of Transportation. 1996. *Roadside Classification Plan*.

Washington State Department of Transportation. 1999. *Roadside Manual*.

## 7. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym/Abbreviation	Explanation
encroachment	undesirable eyesores
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
MP	mile post

## 8. APPENDICES

### 8.1. APPENDIX A: RATINGS AND EVALUATION SHEETS

The presence or absence of water in visual impact assessments skews ratings therefore :

- Where waterbodies are present in significant portions of the landscape unit and ratings for views reached a 7, the landscape unit is determined to have *exceptionally scenic* ratings for water.
- Where ratings for water are between 4 and 6 at any point in the landscape unit, the landscape unit is determined to have *highly scenic* ratings for water.
- Where ratings for water are between 1 and 3 at any point in the landscape unit, the landscape unit is determined to have *scenic* ratings for water. This is due to the fact that water, however minor the areal extent, enhances the visual quality of a scene. For example, a small stream may not be seen for a long duration, but its presence is attractive, as evidenced by the real estate market.

The following figures show the average and peak ratings for each landscape unit in both northbound and southbound directions of travel.

Landscape Unit 1 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak of 6	Avg. 5.06		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak of 5		3.48
<b>Water</b>	Peak of 7			3.20
<b>Ephemeral</b>		Peak of 5		3.04
<b>Human</b>			Peak of 4	2.74
<b>Unity</b>		Peak of 5		3.12
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak of 4	2.68

Landscape Unit 1 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold – Avg.
<b>Landform</b>	6.00			
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak of 5		3.79
<b>Water</b>	Peak of 7			3.77
<b>Ephemeral</b>		Peak of 5		3.45
<b>Human</b>		Peak of 5		2.82
<b>Unity</b>	Peak of 6			3.16
<b>Intactness</b>		Peak of 5		2.82

Landscape Unit 2 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold – Avg.
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	Avg. 5.89		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak of 5	4.41	
<b>Water</b>		Peak of 5		2.05
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak of 4	3.44
<b>Human</b>			Peak of 4	3.25
<b>Unity</b>		Peak of 5		3.90
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak of 4	3.25

Landscape Unit 2 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold – Avg.
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	Avg. 5.64		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak of 5		4.49
<b>Water</b>	Peak of 7			3.42
<b>Ephemeral</b>	Peak of 6			4.38
<b>Human</b>		Peak of 5		2.80
<b>Unity</b>	Peak of 6			3.79
<b>Intactness</b>		Peak of 5		2.86

Landscape Unit 3 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	6.00			
<b>Vegetation</b>	Peak 6	5.31		
<b>Water</b>				0
<b>Ephemeral</b>			4.00	
<b>Human</b>				2
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6	5.62		
<b>Intactness</b>	Peak 6	5.46		

Landscape Unit 3 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>		5.00		
<b>Vegetation</b>	Peak 6	5.34		
<b>Water</b>			Peak 1	0.10
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.38, Peak 3
<b>Human</b>	Peak 6		4.38	
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6	5.14		
<b>Intactness</b>	Peak 6		4.55	

Landscape Unit 4 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	6.00			
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.73
<b>Water</b>			Peak 2	0.22
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.72, Peak 3
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.85
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6			3.33
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.96

Landscape Unit 4 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	6.20, Peak 7			
<b>Vegetation</b>	Peak 6		4.16	
<b>Water</b>		Peak 4		0.24
<b>Ephemeral</b>		Peak 5		3.13
<b>Human</b>	Peak 6			3.58
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6			3.75
<b>Intactness</b>	Peak 6			3.64

Landscape Unit 5 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Most 6.00	5.90		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.06	
<b>Water</b>	Peak 6			1.78
<b>Ephemeral</b>	Peak 6			3.16
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.45
<b>Unity</b>		Peak 5		2.77
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.52

Landscape Unit 5 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 7	5.79		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5		3.89
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		0.88
<b>Ephemeral</b>		Peak 5		3.27
<b>Human</b>		Peak 5		2.56
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6			2.63
<b>Intactness</b>		Peak 5		2.54

Landscape Unit 6 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	6.00			
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.06
<b>Water</b>		4.00		
<b>Ephemeral</b>			4.00	
<b>Human</b>		Peak 5		3.00
<b>Unity</b>		Peak 5		
<b>Intactness</b>		Peak 5		

Landscape Unit 6 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.35		
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.58
<b>Water</b>				Water not in view
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.00
<b>Human</b>				2.12, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.31, Peak 4
<b>Intactness</b>				2.50, Peak 4

Landscape Unit 7 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	6.69, Most 7			
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5		3.78
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		0.73
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	2.49
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.90
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	3.14
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.92

Landscape Unit 7 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.03		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.14	
<b>Water</b>	Peak 7			1.37
<b>Ephemeral</b>		Peak 5		3.60
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.87
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	2.95
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	3.03

Landscape Unit 8 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 7	5.91		
<b>Vegetation</b>	Peak 6		4.55	
<b>Water</b>			Peak 2	0.06
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	2.91
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	3.42
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	3.52
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	3.48

Landscape Unit 8 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.13		
<b>Vegetation</b>			4.31	
<b>Water</b>				00
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.50, Peak 3
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	3.13
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	3.06
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	3.00

Landscape Unit 9 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Most 6	5.82		
<b>Vegetation</b>		5.56		
<b>Water</b>			Peak 1	0.03
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.85
<b>Human</b>	Peak 6			3.54
<b>Unity</b>	Peak 6			3.59
<b>Intactness</b>	Peak 6			3.64

Landscape Unit 9 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 7	5.50		
<b>Vegetation</b>	Peak 6	5.00		
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		0.28
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.00, Peak 2
<b>Human</b>		Peak 5		3.67
<b>Unity</b>		Peak 5		3.72
<b>Intactness</b>		Peak 5		3.78

Landscape Unit 10 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Most 6	5.98		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5		3.88
<b>Water</b>	Peak 6			0.23
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.33
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.53
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	2.54
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.55

Landscape Unit 10 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.08		
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.72
<b>Water</b>	Peak 7			1.81
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	2.99
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	1.97
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	1.95
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	1.94

Landscape Unit 11 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.97		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.03	
<b>Water</b>				000
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.60
<b>Human</b>				2.63, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.49, Peak 3
<b>Intactness</b>				2.54, Peak 3

Landscape Unit 11 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>		5.00		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.22	
<b>Water</b>			Peak 1	0.28
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.69
<b>Human</b>				2.30, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.30, Peak 3
<b>Intactness</b>				2.31, Peak 3

Landscape Unit 12 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 7	5.64		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.22	
<b>Water</b>			Peak 4	1.00
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.31
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.67
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	2.72
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.68

Landscape Unit 12 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.05		
<b>Vegetation</b>		Peak 5	4.28	
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		0.95
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.42
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.55
<b>Unity</b>		Peak 5		2.80
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.65



Landscape Unit 13 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 7	5.97		
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.92
<b>Water</b>		Peak 4		0.64
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.11
<b>Human</b>			Peak 4	2.23
<b>Unity</b>			Peak 4	2.29
<b>Intactness</b>			Peak 4	2.33

Landscape Unit 13 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.79		
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.95
<b>Water</b>		Peak 4		1.69
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.29
<b>Human</b>				2.53, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.53, Peak 3
<b>Intactness</b>				2.53, Peak 3

Landscape Unit 14 Northbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.53		
<b>Vegetation</b>			4.00	
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		3.02
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.76
<b>Human</b>				2.52, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.50, Peak 3
<b>Intactness</b>				2.48, Peak 3

Landscape Unit 14 Southbound				
	Exceptionally Scenic	Highly Scenic	Scenic	Below Scenic Threshold
<b>Landform</b>	Peak 6	5.16		
<b>Vegetation</b>			Peak 4	3.90
<b>Water</b>		Peak 5		2.08
<b>Ephemeral</b>			Peak 4	3.29
<b>Human</b>				2.56, Peak 3
<b>Unity</b>				2.54, Peak 3
<b>Intactness</b>				2.52, Peak 3

<b>Landscape Unit 15 Southbound</b>				
	<b>Exceptionally Scenic</b>	<b>Highly Scenic</b>	<b>Scenic</b>	<b>Below Scenic Threshold</b>
<b>Landform</b>		Peak 5	4.59	
<b>Vegetation</b>				3.24
<b>Water</b>	Peak 6			0.35
<b>Ephemeral</b>				2.41
<b>Human</b>				2.76
<b>Unity</b>				2.82
<b>Intactness</b>				2.88

## 8.2. APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL VIEWS WITHIN LANDSCAPE UNITS

This study considered all likely viewpoints from the project corridor. The following views were not selected as key views but they provide additional information as to the character within each landscape unit.

### 8.2.1. Landscape Unit 1



Figure 103. View of the confluence of the Okanogan and Columbia Rivers MP 263.

### 8.2.2. Landscape Unit 2



Figure 104. Sage covered hillside at MP 266.70

**8.2.3. Landscape Unit 5**



**Figure 105. View of Okanogan from the southbound shoulder**

**8.2.4. Landscape Unit 9**



**Figure 106. MP 307.7 view northwest**



**8.2.5. Landscape Unit 10**



**Figure 107. MP 309.8 view northeast**

**8.2.6. Landscape Unit 12**



**Figure 108. MP 320.6 view southeast**

**8.2.7. Landscape Unit 13**



**Figure 109. Okanogan River at MP 330.5 view north**

**8.2.8. Landscape Unit 14**



**Figure 110. Class years written on mountain above Oroville**



### 8.2.9. Near-by Destinations



Figure 111. McLoughlin Canyon NE of Riverside



Figure 112. Western end of Lake Omak





**Figure 113. Lake Osoyoos State Park - Bakery on site.**



**Figure 114. Okanogan River NE of Riverside**